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THE IDEAS  
OF  
THE APOSTLE PAUL

*TRANSLATED INTO THEIR MODERN  
EQUIVALENTS*

BY

JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE

AUTHOR OF "SELF-CULTURE," "TEN GREAT RELIGIONS,"  
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## P R E F A C E.

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THE purpose of this book is not critical nor exegetical. I do not propose to write another commentary on the Pauline letters, nor to examine accurately the different hypotheses in regard to them which have recently occupied so much attention. I would rather develop the radical convictions which were the source of Paul's power, and make intelligible to common readers the pivotal ideas, around which his thoughts revolved. I wish to translate into the language of common life the great beliefs of his soul, which have been so long hidden by an obscure theological phraseology. If I can succeed, even in a limited extent, in doing this, I shall hope that this book may find a place in the vast library of works which have this apostle for their subject.

That the interest in Paul and his writings is not diminishing is evident from the many valuable publications of the past few years which have given us original views of Pauline Christianity. Omitting the

authors who have written from the old stand-point, I will only refer to the works of Stanley and Jowett, Conybeare and Howson, Canon Farrar, Matthew Arnold, and Martineau, in England; Renan, Presensé, Sabatier, Godet, and others, in France; Baur, and the friends and opponents of his school, in Germany.<sup>1</sup>

Ample materials for the study of the Pauline ideas are to be found in those Epistles the authenticity of which the most destructive criticism has not questioned. The character of Paul, and his ways of thought are fully shown to us in the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians; which are admitted to be genuine even by the Tübingen school of criticism. But it is very possible that the other writings attributed to Paul in the New Testament, as well as the Book of Acts, will continue to be regarded as valid sources of knowledge, after full justice has been done to the exceptions raised against them by modern investigation. A reaction against the extreme position of Baur has already begun among those who profess to be to a greater or less extent his

<sup>1</sup> "Life and Epistles of St. Paul, &c. By Rev. W. J. Conybeare and Rev. J. S. Howson. 1852." "Epistles of St. Paul to the Corinthians, &c. By Arthur Penrhyn Stanley. 1855." "The Epistles of St. Paul, &c. By Benjamin Jowett. 1855." "St. Paul and his Modern Students. By James Martineau" (in "Studies of Christianity. Boston. 1858"). "St. Paul. Par Ernest Renan. 1869." "Baur. Paulus, der Apostel, &c.," 1845 and 1865. See a fuller list in the Appendix.

disciples. "Out of the thirteen Pauline Epistles, commonly received by antiquity as genuine, four only are admitted as unquestionably genuine by Baur."<sup>1</sup> But Pfeiderer, classed by Holtzmann (Hilgenfeld's "Zeitschrift für W. Theologie," vol. xxv., page 437, 1882) with those "who have carried out and completed Baur's theory in the same direction," says: "In addition to the four undisputed Epistles, I hold to be *genuine* the first to the Thessalonians, the Epistle to Philemon, and that to the Philippians; as *unqualifiedly spurious*, that to the Ephesians and the three pastoral Epistles; as *spurious with qualifications*, the second to the Thessalonians, and that to the Colossians."<sup>2</sup> Renan,<sup>3</sup> in addition to these, admits as genuine the second Thessalonians, and as probable that to the Colossians. Others, like Weiss and R. Schmidt believe the "Letters of the Imprisonment" (Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Philemon) must stand or fall together, and that they must all be accepted as genuine.<sup>4</sup> Sabatier<sup>5</sup> accepts all but the

<sup>1</sup> R. W. Mackay. "The Tübingen School and its Antecedents. London. 1863." The passionate partisanship of this writer injures the effect of what would otherwise be a very valuable, as it is a very thorough, argument for the views of Baur and Zeller.

<sup>2</sup> Otto Pfeiderer. "Der Paulinismus. 1873." Translated in "Theolog. Translation Fund," 1877.

<sup>3</sup> "Saint Paul. Par Ernest Renan. Paris. 1869."

<sup>4</sup> Weiss. "Neutest. Theologie."

<sup>5</sup> "L'Apôtre Paul, &c. Par A. Sabatier. Deuxième Edition. Paris. 1881."

Pastoral Epistles, of which he says, "We humbly confess that a long study, with contradictory results, has left us in a state of entire indecision in regard to them." Reuss defends the authenticity of these also.<sup>1</sup> Some of Baur's most distinguished followers have accepted many of the Pauline letters which he gave up. Among these are such eminent scholars as Grimm and Keim, besides theologians like Bleek, Mangold, Meyer, Pressensé, Wetzel, Zimmer, and B. Weiss.<sup>2</sup>

Postponing a further examination of the authenticity of our canon till the end of my book, I will only add here that most of the characteristic ideas of Paul are to be found in the writings universally accepted as genuine. In these we have ample materials for our study,—far more than enough to occupy us in this brief survey. I hope that this attempt to translate some of the principal ideas of Paul into their modern equivalents will be of service to some students. If it enables them to see to any extent the admirable characteristics of this heroic champion of truth and freedom, I shall be grateful for that result.

<sup>1</sup> "Geschichte der Heiligen Schriften des Neuen Testament."

<sup>2</sup> See an article by Holtzmann in the "*Zeitschrift für Wissenschaftliche Theologie*," edited by Hilgenfeld, Leipzig, 1882; and many articles in the "*Studien und Kritiken*," Perthes, Gotha.

I shall resume the further discussion of this question in the Appendix to this volume.



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# IDEAS OF THE APOSTLE PAUL.

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## CHAPTER I.

### CHARACTER AND INFLUENCE OF PAUL.

THE Apostle Paul was one of the most extraordinary men who have ever appeared in the history of the human race. Some men have been great in thought, others in action; Paul was equally distinguished as a thinker and as a man of executive ability. Christianity, under the guidance of Paul, took a new departure. It cut loose from Judaism, and became a religion for mankind. The other apostles were so immersed in Jewish convictions and Jewish prejudices that they were unable to rise to the idea of a universal religion. Jesus was to them only the Christ, only the Jewish Redeemer; not the Prophet and Teacher of man, as man. Paul lifted the Gospel to this plane of catholicity and freedom.

Paul was a soul prepared by Providence for this great work of extending the Gospel to the Gentiles. To attain this end, it would seem as if a man must



be a Jew and Gentile at the same time, besides being a Christian. When we consider the immense force of prejudice, and how powerless genius, piety and popularity all become when they oppose it, we must admire the influence that could overcome at once that double wall of prejudice, the Jewish hatred for the Gentile, and the Gentile contempt for the Jew. When Paul began his ministry, there were scarcely any Christians except those who were also Jews. His office was to persuade these Jewish Christians to give their Messiah to the heathen, and to persuade the heathen to accept this Jewish Messiah as their Saviour and Master. This could be done only by leading both up out of these prejudices to a higher ground ; and the man to do this must have felt and known those prejudices, and have risen above them himself by a deep spiritual experience ; must have thoroughly understood the defects and needs of Jew and Gentile, and, united with this deep insight, must possess a power of logic by which to convince others. In fact, he must be both by original endowment and acquired experience, a universal man ; and such a universal man was Paul.

He was one sent by Providence for this work. He was a Jew by birth, but with no Jewish mind. His intellect was at once capacious and energetic, uniting in its complex nature the most antagonist tendencies. Strength of intellect is apt to be narrow ; width of view tends to indifference. But the mind of Paul had the energy of a mountain torrent and

the breadth of an inland lake. He was a theologian, acute even to subtlety; a man of the world, practical even to utilitarianism; a logician, to whom all truth seemed to take the shape of an argument; a spiritualist, who would only state his intuitions, not defend them. How burning a zeal had he, yet how calm, clear and rational! The pivot of his theology was the doctrine that we are *justified by faith*; but who so minute in his practical exhortations to Christian duty, who so eminently a *moral* preacher, as Paul?

His experience was as remarkable as his endowment. The Jewish boy was born in a Grecian city, renowned throughout Asia Minor for its literature and elegant arts. Thence removed to Jerusalem, he went through the training of the Pharisees, zealously observing all their strict forms and minute regulations. In the direction of effort, constraint, ascetic self-denial, the crushing of the appetites, the swathing of human nature by rigid bands, the attempt to mould it by external pressure into a given shape—in this direction no one ever went further than he. Here he had nothing to learn, for he had tried it to the utmost and found it insufficient. Meantime, while this moral training was in progress under the wise and learned Gamaliel, his intellect received a thorough culture. Then came his Christian experience, a ray of God's light descending into his stormy and impetuous mind, God's love at once breaking the chains of his rigid system, bringing him from form to freedom, from narrow rules to great principles, from

the letter to the spirit, and giving him good reason to say, "If any man be in Christ, *he is a new creature.*"

To many readers, however, Paul is an obscure writer, and some have inferred that this was because he had no clear ideas himself. More than this, it is believed by others that he was a man of narrow prejudices; that he was one-sided in his doctrine; that he was arrogant and overbearing; that his moral teaching was imperfect; that he was a Calvinist, and that he gave a false direction to the course of Christianity. In recent times, the German theologian Baur has thought that he had discovered a bitter opposition between Paul and Peter. Even Renan, who has written one of the best books concerning Paul, in his final estimate of his character puts him in a lower rank than St. Francis of Assisi, and the author of the "Imitation of Christ."

Those critics who are usually candid often grow bitter when they speak of Paul. Mr. Frothingham, in his book called "The Cradle of Christ," makes some disparaging remarks concerning this apostle, charging him with low views of God, "anthropomorphic to an amazing degree," and with a very faulty morality.<sup>1</sup> A still more recent writer, Victor Schoelcher, in a volume entitled "The True St. Paul," accuses him of being false, vain, overbearing, teaching great errors, often incomprehensible, giving a false view of God, and inculcating a very imperfect morality.

<sup>1</sup> See Note C at the end of this volume.

All this seems to me to indicate a serious misunderstanding of the apostle. If I, on the other hand, were asked for my opinion of Paul, I might answer thus: "He was one of the greatest souls whom the world has produced, uniting in himself the grandest qualities of mind and heart. He emancipated Christianity from its Jewish form; and, alone among the apostles, fully understood and carried out the ideas of Jesus which have made of his religion a gospel for mankind. He was the founder of Liberal Christianity, believing that there might be many members and yet one body; teaching that in the Christian Church there should be both variety and unity, freedom and order. He was able to be thus wide because he went down so deep in his experience and up so high in his aspiration. He was a logical and a spiritual thinker, possessing both intuitive and dialectic power. His reasonings are so subtle and close that often, knowing little of the question in dispute, we find it difficult to follow the argument. But though possessed of this intense activity of thought, he placed thought far below love. He said that belief would change, opinion alter, knowledge pass away; but that faith, hope and love would abide forever."

Some natures are simple, others complex. And some complex natures are not fully at harmony with themselves. Then they are hard to understand; thus they are often misjudged. So it was with Paul at first; so it has been ever since; so it is now. He is a complex soul, and never fully harmonized with

himself and his surroundings. But he is planned on large proportions, he is moved by the deepest convictions, his heart is on fire with the noblest enthusiasm for a great object. He lives for it and dies for it, and the result of his life is an era in the history of man. He gave a fresh impulse to human thought, and the force of this movement is not yet exhausted. Augustine, Luther, Pascal, Wesley have each, in turn, received from the Apostle Paul the mighty influence which awakened their spiritual natures. His place in universal history is in the front rank of those who create a new epoch in civilization and progress.

Paul was filled with a knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures. He, like Josephus, usually quotes from the Septuagint; yet he was not dependent on it, but sometimes translated directly from the Hebrew,<sup>1</sup> — as 1 Cor. xiv. 21; Gal. iii. 11; Rom. ix. 17, — and often improved on the Septuagint. He quotes from all parts of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha, even from Books now lost. He quotes from the Book of Wisdom, a work written only forty years B. C. He quotes from one or two Greek authors, and seems to be acquainted with Philo, an author much discredited among the Rabbis at Jerusalem. He was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts xxii. 3) in Jerusalem. Gamaliel was a mild and liberal teacher, Paul a fiery zealot; hence the Tendency School thinks this an invention of the author of Acts to recommend him to the Jewish Christians. But do aged and

<sup>1</sup> Hausrath in Schenkel's *Bibel-Lexicon*.



mild teachers never have ardent young disciples, less liberal than themselves?

In person Paul seems to have been rather small and weak, not to say insignificant (2 Cor. x. 10). He was evidently not accounted a great orator. It was thought he did better as a writer than a speaker. This, however, was only the opinion of the literary critics in Corinth, who, like critics in all times, are apt to judge speakers by narrow rhetorical standards. So too at Athens the men of culture do not appear to have thought much of him, and politely adjourned the discussion to a more convenient occasion. But the people at Lystra seem to have been more impressed by his discourse, and called him Hermes, the God of eloquence. In fact, a mind so full of matter, and with such earnest convictions, must have produced a great impression. Several of his speeches are reported in the Book of Acts, probably not verbally, but only in substance. The speech at Athens has naturally come to us from Paul's own memory, as communicated by him to Luke. The introduction is extremely happy and is founded on a broad view of Religion. "I see," he said in substance, "by your desire to worship all the Gods, even those who are unknown to you, that you are a very religious people." Like a wise teacher, he began his speech by recognizing the truth which they already believed, and so leading them up to something higher. In this speech he has nothing to say of the Jewish Messiah, he makes no allusion to the Jewish Scriptures,

but meets them on the common ground of universal religious truth.

Like many other men who have powerfully moved the world, Paul seems to have suffered much from bodily weakness and disease (1 Cor. ii. 3; Gal. iv. 14). He felt his body as a burden (2 Cor. v. 4), and one which was becoming more of a trial every day. He also alludes to a special physical trial of some sort, "a thorn in the flesh" (2 Cor. xii. 7), supposed by some to have been epilepsy, but which was possibly stammering. His eyes were peculiarly weak, so that he usually wrote by an amanuensis. Very excitable, easily moved by the kindness or ill-treatment of others, not soon forgetting injuries or benefits, he may (says Hausrath) "have sometimes been passionate and even unjust, but on the other hand was capable of a tender love and devoted self-sacrifice impossible to colder natures."

The difficulties in understanding the writings of Paul come from different sources. In part they are occasioned by the extreme conciseness of his expression, and the rushing rapidity of his thoughts, which omit many steps of his argument. Partly the obscurity comes from our not knowing the arguments of his opponents to which he replies,—arguments which he does not think it necessary to state, since they were familiar to his readers; sometimes from the necessity of concealment, when touching on subjects which would give deadly offence to Jews or Romans (for example, 2 Thess. ii. 3). Another source of

obscurity is the false order of his Epistles in our version, and the theory of infallible inspiration which prevents us from finding in some passages the remains of old Jewish conceptions not yet eliminated (perhaps 1 Cor. xv. 45-48; Coloss. i. 16); and finally, there is the difference between the figurative methods of Eastern speech and the prosaic thinking of the West. What can we make of such an argument as that derived from the case of Hagar and Sarah, symbolized as the Law and the Gospel? Why not admit, as Jerome did, that the argument (Gal. iii. 16) from the singular form of "seed," rests on a grammatical blunder?—though in Jerome's opinion the argument was good enough for "the foolish Galatians."<sup>1</sup>

Paul's inspiration was not infallibility, and he was sometimes in error, sometimes also uncertain. He pretends to no such infallibility. All knowledge, he says, including his own, is partial, incomplete, and finally to disappear. The best statement we can possibly put in words is partial, and must give way to a larger one; which in its turn will be fulfilled in something higher (1 Cor. xiii, 3-12). Criticism, therefore, is fully justified in examining every article of Pauline doctrine, and rejecting what cannot be verified in its last analysis. "Prove ALL things," said Paul himself—"hold fast what is good, abstain from whatever appears to be evil."

<sup>1</sup> But see Lightfoot, *ad locum*, "Epistle to the Galatians. A revised text with notes," &c. By J. B. Lightfoot. 1869.

Criticism has the right to examine and test everything; but rashness and recklessness are not criticism. Toward the great leaders of thought a little reverence is due, even by the most advanced thinkers of our particular year of the Lord. Coleridge's canon of criticism is always to be kept in mind: "Until I understand the ignorance of Plato, I had better conclude myself to be ignorant of his understanding."

Obscurity in a writer is not always a sign of depth, but neither is it always the evidence of confused thought. Plato is obscure, Hegel is obscure, and Paul is often obscure. But there are questions which go down so deep that their discussion cannot be made quite as easy as a child's story-book. In such domains of thought even great thinkers must go sounding on their dim and perilous way; and so when Paul attacks the question of God's fore-ordination and human responsibility, we cannot expect to read him exactly as we run over the leader of our morning newspaper when we go to the city on an early train.

In regard to the supposed incoherence of Paul, let us listen to the testimony of John Locke:—

"I think there is not anywhere to be found a more pertinent, close arguer, who has his eye always on the mark he drives at. This men would find, if they would study him as they ought,—with more regard to the divine authority than to hypotheses of their own, or to opinions of the season. I do not say that he is everywhere clear in his expressions to us now,

but I do say he is everywhere a coherent, pertinent writer; and wherever, in his commentators and interpreters, any sense is given to his words that dis-joints his discourse, or deviates from his argument and looks like a wandering thought, it is easy to know who it is, and whose the impertinence is,—his, or theirs that father it on him.”

So says Locke in his commentary on our Apostle’s writings; and no one will contend that Locke did not understand the nature of close and clear thinking.

The view taken of our Apostle by Renan is too striking to be passed by. In the last chapter of what appears to me to be his greatest work<sup>1</sup> he thus sums up his opinions in regard to him:—

“What place will criticism accord to him? What rank will it assign him in the hierarchy of those who have been servants of the Ideal?

“We serve the Ideal in doing good, seeking truth, realizing the beautiful. In front of the sacred procession of humanity walks the good man,—the man of virtue; next to him the man of truth,—the wise man, the philosopher; then the man of the beautiful,—the artist, the poet. Jesus appears to us, circled by his heavenly aureole, as the Ideal of goodness and beauty. . . . What was Paul? He was not a saint. The dominant trait in his character is not goodness (*bonté*). He was proud, stiff, determined. He fought for his rights, was full of self-assertion, used severe

<sup>1</sup> “Saint Paul. Par Ernest Renan. Paris. 1869. Chap. xxii. Coup d’œil sur l’œuvre de Paul.”



language against his opponents. He believed he was certainly right, did not doubt for a moment the correctness of his own views, was in frequent difficulties and disputes. Nor was he a man of science. In fact, we may say that he inflicted an injury on science by his paradoxical contempt for reason, by his eulogium on evident folly, by his apotheosis of transcendental absurdities. Nor was he a poet. His writings, though works of the highest originality, are without charm; their form is harsh, and usually without grace. What then was he?

“He was eminently a man of action, a soul of strength; enthusiastic, courageous; conqueror, missionary, propagandist; all the more ardent because having displayed his energy first on the opposite side. Now the man of action, though so noble when contending for a high aim, is not as near to God as he is who lives in the pure love of the True, the Good and the Beautiful. An apostle is by his very nature somewhat contracted in his soul; he aims at success, and sacrifices himself for this. The contact with realities always soils the soul a little. The highest places in the Kingdom of Heaven are reserved for those who have been touched by a ray of grace, those who have adored only the Ideal. The man of action is always a poor artist, for it is not his only end to reflect the splendor of the Universe; he can never be a man of wisdom, for he forms his opinions in reference to public utility; nor is he even a very virtuous man, since he can never be irreproachable. The folly

and wickedness of men compel him to make compromises with them.

“Least of all is he an amiable person ; reserve, the most charming of virtues, is forbidden him. The world favors the audacious, those who help themselves. Paul, so great, so upright, is obliged to insist on his title of an apostle. Our defects are a part of our strength, our good qualities are a source of weakness. In fine, the historical character most resembling that of Paul, is Luther. In both we find the same violence of language (see especially Phil. iii. 2, and Luther’s ‘Captivity of Babylon’), the same passionate energy, noble independence, and semi-frantic attachment to a thesis held as if it were absolute truth.

“I therefore persist in my conclusion that, in founding Christianity, the work of Paul is far inferior to that of Jesus. In my view it is even necessary to rank him below Francis of Assisi, and the author of the ‘Imitation of Christ,’ both of whom saw Jesus from near by. The Son of God is unique. To appear for a moment, to cast around a radiant light, sweet and strong, and to die young — this is the life of a God. To struggle, battle, dispute, conquer — this is the life of a man. After having been, thanks to Protestant Orthodoxy, the leading Christian theologian, Paul is in our days coming to the end of his reign. Jesus, on the other hand, is more alive than ever. The true *résumé* of Christianity is not to be found in the Epistle to the Romans, but in the

Sermon on the Mount. The Gospel which will live forever is in the Evangelists, not in the Epistles of Paul. The writings of Paul have been a stumbling-block and a peril; they have caused the chief defects in Christian Theology. Paul is the father of the subtle Augustine, the arid Aquinas, the sombre Calvinist, the sour Jansenist, and the ferocious theology which predestines to damnation. Jesus is the father of those who seek the repose of their souls in the dreams of the Ideal world. The continued life of Christianity is derived from the little which we know of the word and the person of Jesus. Only the man of the Ideal, the divine Poet, the great Artist, defies time and its revolutions. He alone is seated on the right hand of God the Father, throughout the years of Eternity."

This brilliant passage is imbued with the spirit of that Roman Catholic theology, from which the writer received his early impressions, — impressions which it is so difficult ever wholly to escape from. "Fling away human nature with a pitch-fork," says Horace, "and it will come back again." The habits of early life are a second nature; and here, as in "The life of Jesus," Renan conceives of the beauty of holiness as consisting in rapt contemplation, ecstasies of lonely communion with God, and "looks commercing with the skies." That the Son is unique we agree; that he and not Paul is the true founder of Christianity, we believe. But Jesus is not unique because he sought the repose of his soul in dreams of an ideal world. Jesus also was eminently a man of action. During

his whole life he was "about his Father's business," and when about to die he said, "I have finished *the work* which thou gavest me to do."

In Catholic paintings, Jesus is usually represented as the type of the passive virtues, — submission, resignation, patience and gentle affection; he bows down his head like a bulrush. But such is not the Jesus of the Gospels. *He* was eminently a man of action, pursuing a steady aim, that of convincing his nation that the true Kingdom of Heaven was one of Love, Truth and Peace; and seeking to become the Christ, the King of all, by being the servant of all. So he hoped to save his nation from destruction, and make its people the leaders of mankind in the worship and service of a Universal Father. In this spirit he acted, taught, went about doing good, held discussions with the leaders at Jerusalem, preached the good news to the poor. He had a distinct, practical object in it all — to found the true Kingdom of Heaven, by which the Mosaic law would be fulfilled, and become the religion of mankind. His virtues were not those of a recluse; he lived among men, the friend of publicans and sinners, teaching the common people by the way side, on the lake shore, in the courts of the Temple, in the village synagogue, in the houses of his friends. He was full of human tenderness, but also capable of righteous indignation. He was prompt to meet, in open debate, Pharisee or Sadducee, the followers of Herod or the emissaries of the priesthood. The true portrait of Jesus is yet to be

painted, — that which shall combine in perfect harmony the highest expression of wisdom, love and manly action.

The man of action is not necessarily limited by his aim, any more than the sage, the saint or the artist. "Reserve is forbidden him." By no means. Jesus had his silences, his reserves; and from these he drew new strength for action. Washington, the man of action, was eminently reserved; so much so as to be almost inaccessible. Washington was essentially a man of action, — neither sage, artist, nor saint; but he stands at the head of all whom this continent has produced — no one near him, no one second to him. Franklin, so eminent in science, is far beneath him; and what American or European artist or poet or saint of his time can be compared in majestic greatness with that solemn form? Goethe was an incomparable artist, Wesley a noble saint; but I think no one would put either on the same plane with Washington.

It is a mistake, therefore, in Renan's classification, to draw such a sharp distinction between these three kinds of greatness, and to arrange them in this order of precedence.

A man of *mere* action, who is not impelled by high convictions toward a great end, and whose heart is not purified by devotion to supreme beauty, no doubt illustrates greatness on a low plane. But the man of *mere* insight and knowledge, whose knowledge consists only in abstract contemplation and study for its



own sake, who takes no generous interest in others, and feels no responsibility to God, certainly stands no higher. Nor is the saint one whit more noble, whose saintship consists only in seeking the repose of his soul in the dreams of the ideal world, and taking no part in human activities. For he who loves not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? If Francis of Assisi stands in the front rank of noble souls, it is not because of his rapt devotion, but because this profound piety flowed out in active charity. In every truly great soul, action, thought, and love must be in harmonious union, though one or the other may take the lead.

We cannot therefore admit the proposition that the man of action is not so near to God as he who lives in the pure love of the True, the Beautiful and the Good. This is the theory which in the early and middle ages diverted the life of the church into lauras and monasteries; and in modern times leads to the pedantry of abstract scholarship, and the egotism of literary and artistic self-seeking. If a life given too exclusively to action narrows the soul, a life given too exclusively to thought chills it, and one of abstract devotion to beauty ends in selfishness. Cannot a man of action be moved by the deepest religious convictions? Was not Paul's heart "touched by a ray of grace," and did not he "adore the Ideal"? When he said "The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God," did he not adore the

Ideal? No doubt the man of action is determined in the expression of his opinions by his sense of public need. But the great lake is not the less deep and full, because the river which issues from it flows with beneficent course by a narrow channel which winds among meadows and farms, carrying its bounty where it is most needed. M. Renan goes so far as to say that the man of action cannot live a perfectly pure life, but must condescend to the baseness which surrounds him. "In the world but not of it" is a better maxim. Jesus at least said of his disciples, "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from evil."

When Renan depreciates Paul in comparison with those who live for the Ideal, it is curious that he did not see that the ideality of Paul was the source of his reality. Paul himself describes it when he says, "While we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things not seen are eternal." And when Renan ranks the divine poet above the apostle, he must grant, unless he defines poetry by its mere form, that no greater poem was ever sung than the outbursts of heavenly melody which are found in these letters, written with no literary intent. What a celestial strain is the Hymn to Love, which flows from the Apostle's heart in the midst of the practical details of his letter to the Corinthians! The Theban eagle, "sailing with supreme dominion" through the depths of the azure heavens, never soared

higher than Paul, when he ascended on mighty pinion in the passage (Rom. viii. 31-39) which begins — “What then shall we say to these things?” What in Milton or Dante is more sublime than the solemn strain, full of immortal hope, which has been read by so many thousand graves; and which lifts us from the thought of corruption, dishonor, weakness, and the outward form, to the sight of incorruption, glory, power, and the spiritual house from heaven, when this mortal shall have put on immortality, and death be swallowed up in victory? What pathos of song more touching than the passages (2 Cor. iv. 7-18; v. 20-vi. 10; xi. 22-xii. 13) in which, in his longing for the sympathy and love of his Corinthian friends, he pours out his soul to them, telling them of his trials, forcing himself to speak of his labors and sacrifices, that he may win back their confidence. Some may see in these passages only the utterances of a diseased vanity. But if we are able, by the exercise of historic imagination, to put ourselves into his place, and read his soul, we shall find in all literature nothing more touching than this outflow of an irrepressible longing for human love.

It is certainly true that we do not find in the character of Paul that harmony which makes all human powers in their fulness to be in perfect accord in the soul of Jesus. Paul never attained, during his life, to this divine peace. All he could say at the end was, “I have fought a good fight. I have finished the course. I have kept the faith.” But this he had a

right to say. His whole life was warfare. Jerome says of him, "When I read the Apostle Paul, I seem not to hear words, but thunders."

In this respect Renan is right in comparing him with Luther. Both were men of war from their youth; both of them nobly devoted to a great cause not their own; both founders of a new form of Christian thought and life. Inwardly, their experiences were identical. Both Paul and Luther devoted their early energy to the salvation of their own souls by religious works—one by the works of the Jewish Law, the other by the works of the Roman Catholic church. Neither of them gained inward satisfaction thus; and each of them found it at last by faith in a God of grace, through the revelation of Jesus Christ in the soul.

But though Luther was one of the greatest among those who have made an epoch in history, he was not as great as Paul. Luther translated the ideas of Paul into the language of his own time, and expressed the Pauline thought in its modern equivalents. But the original poem is greater than the best translation. It required a genius of the highest order, inspired by a prophetic vision, to develop the doctrine of Justification by Faith for the first time, so that it should continue to be a religious inspiration for all time.

For it must be observed that this doctrine, which proceeds from a deep spiritual insight, was an original intuition with our Apostle. It is involved, no doubt, in the teaching of Jesus, and in his life and

death. But it was first evolved, so as to be visible to the understanding, by the intellectual penetration of Paul. By this profound conception he laid the basis of Christian theology. Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, used in turn this massive and powerful weapon in their several conflicts.

We cannot then agree with Renan's conclusions, nor accept as final his classification. Paul is greater than he has ever been stated to be, even by his most ardent followers. He has also probably made more mistakes, and fallen into more errors, than have been seen even by those most disposed to disparage him. Neither his real greatness, nor his real defects have ever yet been adequately pointed out. But Time, which judges the world, men and angels, will finally give him his true place in the hierarchy of human benefactors.



## CHAPTER II.

### SOME SCENES IN THE LIFE OF PAUL.

THE life of Paul divides itself into three principal periods, which we may summarize as follows :—

#### I. MISSIONARY PERIOD.

A.D.

- 33.—1. Conversion of Paul. — Acts, ix. 1-22 ; xxii. ; xxvi.  
36.—2. Residence in Arabia and Damascus. — Gal. i. 17, 18.  
37.—3. First visit to Jerusalem. — Gal. i. 18 ; Acts, xi. 30.  
4. Missions in Syria. — Acts, xi. 25.  
5. Missionary journey to Cyprus, Pamphylia, and Galatia.  
— Acts, xiii. 1 ; xiv. 28.  
51.—6. Conference at Jerusalem. — Acts, xv. ; Gal. iii.  
52.—7. Second missionary journey. — Acts, xv. 36. Crosses to  
Europe, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth.  
55.— *Letters to the Thessalonians.*

#### II. PERIOD OF CONTEST WITH THE JEWS.

- 55.—8. Paul returns to Asia, Ephesus, and Antioch. — Acts,  
xviii. 18, 22. Discussion with Peter. — Gal. ii. 11-  
22. Returns to Ephesus, and remains three years. —  
Acts, xix. 1-20 ; xx. 31.  
*Letter to the Galatians.*  
*First Letter to the Corinthians.*

- 58.—9. Sails to Macedonia. Three months in Greece.—Acts, xx. 1, 2. Returns to Macedonia, and crosses to Asia Minor.—Acts, xx. 4, 6.  
*Letter to the Romans* (written from Corinth).  
 59.— *Second Letter to the Corinthians* (written from Macedonia).

### III. PERIOD OF THE CAPTIVITY.

- 60.—10. Paul bids the Ephesians farewell. Sails to Tyre, Ptolemais, Cæsarea, Jerusalem.—Acts, xx. 17–xxi. 15.  
 62.—11. Captivity at Cæsarea for two years.—Acts, xxiv. 27.  
*Letters to the Ephesians, Colossians, and to Philemon.*  
 64.—12. Two years' captivity in Rome.—Acts, xxviii. 30.  
*Letter to the Philippians.*

The above dates are conjectural, but rest on statements in the Book of Acts and the letter to the Galatians. The account in Acts closes abruptly, leaving Paul a prisoner in Rome, but in a light confinement, dwelling in his own hired house. Why the history should have stopped at this point we do not know. Some accident to the writer, or separation from the Apostle by going elsewhere, was the possible occasion. The burning of Rome (which took place in this very year 64, when Luke probably ended his story) furnished Nero with a motive for persecuting the Christians, in order to turn from himself the charge of having set the city on fire. Paul and Luke may have perished together in the terrible massacres of Christians which Tacitus describes. In that case, the last sentence in Acts might have been added by another hand.

Our sources of information for Paul's life and character are the last part of the Book of Acts, and his

own letters. The authenticity of these writings rests on the general consent of opinion in the Christian Church as early, at least, as the end of the second century. Frequent and distinct quotations from the Book of Acts are made by Irenæus, before that time. Only in the latest period has its historic value been called in question,—and that chiefly in reference to the first part of the book, before Paul appears prominently on the scene. The last part, which describes the missionary journeys and labors of our Apostle, has all the stamp of historic truth. It is evident that the writer was his companion, and either was a personal witness of these events, or heard of them from his own mouth.

The genuineness and veracity of the chief Epistles of Paul — those to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians — have never been questioned. The objections to the Ephesians and Colossians have little weight against the unanimous testimony of antiquity to their authenticity. The Pastoral Epistles give rise to grave doubt,—but chiefly because they seem directed against errors and heresies which belong to a later time. At all events, they throw little additional light on the ideas or character of the Apostle.

We first meet with Paul as a fiery zealot, assisting at the martyrdom of Stephen. How little did he then think that he was to follow in the precise path which Stephen had opened! For Stephen was apparently the first among Christian teachers who saw and announced that Judaism was to pass away. He was

accused of blasphemy, for teaching that Jesus would destroy the Temple and abolish the Mosaic ritual. His defence (as recorded in Acts vii.) was to show that the Temple was not essential to true worship, since Abraham made a covenant with God when there was no temple (vii. 2-8); that God was with Joseph in Egypt when there was no temple (9); with Moses on Mount Sinai, and made *that* a temple and holy ground (30-33); with the Church in the wilderness; in the tabernacle until the days of Solomon; and even when the Temple was built, declared that he did not dwell in temples made with hands. Therefore, Stephen argued, the Temple might be destroyed, and yet God's true worship remain. In reply to the other charge of blaspheming the law of Moses, he said that *they* had rather rebelled against Moses, and disobeyed him as their fathers had before, by putting Jesus to death, whom Moses had announced as a prophet to come after him. All this argument Paul probably heard, and, if so, it impressed him deeply.

There was a singular power of faith, courage, and insight in the character of Stephen. We need not suppose the report of his speech in the Book of Acts to be literally accurate. Probably none of these speeches which Luke records were reported verbatim. But there can be very little doubt that we have its substance; and it shows an amazing grasp of thought and keenness of insight. It gave promise of a splendid future. It must have seemed very hard for the body of Christians, mostly uneducated and untrained, to

lose such a highly cultivated and devoted mind as that of Stephen.

Sometimes, when such an one goes, we say, "The loss is irreparable ; that man cannot be spared. That young mother, how can her children do without her ? — that father, the support of his family ; that statesman, the tried ruler, the one man in whom all trust, on whom all lean." So it was when Stephen went. It seemed as if the church of Christ could not possibly spare him. So it was, still more, when Jesus went, — the one being in the world whom the world could not do without ; whose place no one could take. The good and wise, the pure and generous go ; the souls of genius, the creatures of a divine inspiration, they go. And then God raises them up on high, to look down on us from above, and be our inspiration. Their great lives and holy examples inspire us to new effort. The memory of the mother lives in her children's hearts. When Jesus went away he came nearer to his friends than he had been before. The sight of Stephen's death, the sound of Stephen's voice, his face like that of an angel, his cry of joy and triumph in the midst of his agony, these were the first steps in the conversion of Saul.

Paul went away, moody, angry, but with the barbed arrow of a new conviction in his soul. He "kicked against the pricks ;" he became more violent against the followers of Jesus ; till, at once, to him, too, came that heavenly vision, that divine face. To him came those tender words from the Jesus revealed to him



inwardly; a sight of God's pardon, grace, love; of a great opportunity, a noble mission. And he rose from the ground a new man. How far this was an outward vision and how far an inward, I do not pretend to decide. The essential part of it was the inward part. In that hour Paul became inwardly a new creature. Old things had passed away, all things had become new. Peace had come to his soul through faith in this divine friend. Jesus, the risen Jesus, the King of Truth, the Prince of Peace, the manifestation of God's universal love to men, was now his Master. Every past purpose of his life he cast behind him. All his pride of knowledge, of holiness, his high position in the Jewish Church, his Jewish attainments and virtues, he laid down. Now he was to become the preacher of a small and despised company, an insignificant sect; to share their trials, persecutions and insignificance. He could not foresee — no one could foresee — that he was in this very way to become the apostle of the religion of civilized man; that his extempore writings were to be a part of the Scriptures of mankind; that his arguments were to be studied by the most learned men during centuries; that a vast literature in all languages was to be devoted to the explanation of his doctrines; and that on all the continents of earth his influence, unweakened by time, undiminished by revolutions, reformations, new philosophies and the progress of science, should be still the spiritual mother of myriad souls.

But the first we hear of Paul was at the martyrdom of Stephen. "The witnesses threw down their garments at the feet of a young man whose name was Saul." When a man was to be stoned to death, the law was that those by whose testimony he was convicted should be his executioners. The object was to make them careful in giving their testimony. Now these witnesses stood in front, close to the criminal; and, to throw the stones more easily, they dropped off their toga or outside cloak. Paul was so near Stephen that they threw their clothes to him to keep. So he saw Stephen's face in all its angelic joy, beholding Christ coming toward him with open arms and a smile of welcome. That blaze of heavenly light was reflected in the rapture of Stephen's countenance. It eclipsed the brutal murderers and the raging crowd. He saw only the face of Christ, and Paul saw only *his* face. That look went with him wherever he went; that peace was something past his comprehension. It troubled him in his Jewish bigotry; it drove him, by a natural recoil, to fiercer persecution; but the look was photographed on his heart. And so, when he was converted and became a Christian, he turned completely round, and from a fierce bigot became emancipated from the letter and the form, and passed directly into the freedom of the Spirit.

Paul could not but ask himself, "Which is God's true servant,—this man, so blissful in the midst of a horrid death; or these, gnashing their teeth with brutal rage?—he, praying that they may be forgiven

their sin, and commending his spirit to his Master; or they, stopping their ears against the heavenly prayer, and drowning it with their savage cries?" Though these events did not convert Paul, yet no doubt they prepared the way for his conversion.

But a character as strong and deep as Paul's, though sensitive to every impulse, is not easily or suddenly changed from its settled purpose; like a majestic tree, whose thousand twigs and multitude of leaves are moved by the slightest air, but which yet stands firm against a tempest. Paul, the zealous Pharisee, though inwardly troubled, doubtful, and wretched, yet went on in his fixed course, determined to persecute and put down this heresy so decidedly hostile to the Pharisee theology, and which was endangering the solemn institutions and awful rites of Judaism. As though by a greater outward zeal he would atone to himself for his inward vacillation, he volunteered to go to Damascus where the new sect was gaining ground, to bring every Christian he could find to Jerusalem. On his way occurred that remarkable event, before alluded to, which led to his conversion. Of this occurrence we have, in the Book of Acts, three separate accounts, contained in the ninth, twenty-second, and twenty-fifth chapters.<sup>1</sup> This event has been

<sup>1</sup> The difference as to details in these three accounts shows conclusively two things; first, that there is no literal accuracy in the New Testament narrative; secondly, that the narrators make no attempt to avoid such apparent contradictions. The simplicity and honesty of the writer becomes evident from such facts as these.

regarded in different ways. One view has been brought forward by Rationalism, which assumes, as we have done, that Paul had received many impressions favorable to Christianity, especially in witnessing the death of Stephen, but had forcibly repressed them. Yet he could not quite silence this inward voice. On his way to Damascus, there occurred a thunder-storm. He was struck by lightning, and blinded. This he conceived to be an actual appearance of Christ, and so was led to believe in Christianity.

But such an explanation is evidently superficial. To mistake a flash of lightning for the appearance of Christ, and to imagine the subsequent dialogue, would argue Paul to be an insane man or an idiot, which no one, I apprehend, supposes. And to make a mistake like this the cause of his conversion, and of all the vast labors and immense results which followed it, is like the Indian hypothesis which supposes the earth to be supported on the back of a turtle; or like that early geographical theory which gave the current of the Mississippi river as the cause of the Gulf Stream in the Atlantic ocean.<sup>1</sup>

Another view of this event makes it supernatural, but inward,—an inward revelation made to Paul's mind. This is supported by Galatians (i. 16), "It pleased God to reveal His son in me." But (1 Cor. ix. 1) he also says, "Have I not seen Christ?" And

<sup>1</sup> See Malte Brun's geography for this curious opinion.

again (1 Cor. xv. 8), "Last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."

The true view, perhaps, is that Paul saw Christ *really*, but with the spiritual eye. It was not a vision of Christ, but Christ himself, who appeared to Paul. He was seen not by his outward eye, but by an inward revelation. This would explain why those who were with him saw no man, and, according to one of the accounts, did not even hear the voice which spoke to Paul.

But no outward miracle can convert the soul. Jesus himself says of certain persons, "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one came from the dead." If Paul was wholly convinced of the falsehood of the claim of Jesus to be the Christ, the miracle could not have convinced him. An outward blinding light does not give light to the mind. The very words of Jesus show that he was already inwardly convinced, and was resisting those convictions. "Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me? *It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*" As oxen kick against the goad of their drivers, but only drive it more into their flesh, so Paul, by resisting the inward voice of his conscience, only made that voice more terrible.

The mighty light which shone around, so that the dazzling brightness of that terrible desert mid-day sun was eclipsed by it, was only the external part of the miracle. Paul saw something else, heard something else, which his companions did not see nor hear.



He stood face to face with the majestic tenderness of the transfigured Redeemer; was told that *he*, the bitter persecutor, had been chosen to be an apostle; that he, the narrow zealot, was to be the prophet of the broadest human religion; that he, the bigoted Jew, was to go far hence among the Gentiles, and suffer for Jesus, his new master. Trembling, his eyes dark, his soul full of a new light, he rose and went to Damascus, and there heard from a Christian voice the words, "Brother Saul, receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost."

So there he became a Christian; there he was taught to know Jesus. In that oldest city, perhaps, of earth — Damascus — an old city in the time of Abraham, nineteen hundred years before; the garden city, loveliest spot which man has chosen, fed by rushing cool streams from anti-Lebanon, which traverse every street and toss themselves into fountains among thick masses of damask roses in every garden — there Paul sat, day by day, a meek scholar, learning the glad tidings of this new Gospel.

What a fearful resolution was Paul now called upon to take! It was to give up everything he had loved and lived for; to join the feeble sect he had been persecuting; to renounce his Jewish learning his hardly-earned reputation, his great influence with the Sanhedrim and people; to cast it away and count it nothing; to begin anew to learn the alphabet of knowledge from one who had died as a felon, and instead of his noble and powerful associates to become

the companion of illiterate fishermen. Never was a harder trial laid on man than rested on Paul in that sweet city of Damascus. Amid the cool sound of its rushing brooks and tossing fountains, amid the fragrance of its delicious atmosphere, laden with the perfume of roses, he gradually gathered strength for the great resolution. It seemed to be the greatest of sacrifices, but in reality it was the greatest of blessings. Truly in him was fulfilled the saying, "He who loseth his life for my sake, the same shall find it." Paul did not know what an access of reputation, influence and power was to come to him from this decision. He could not know that he was exchanging the narrow sphere and local fame of a Jewish Rabbi for the vast work of the apostle of a religion which should embrace the earth; that he was to announce to Europe the faith to which the learning of Athens and power of Rome should equally bow; and that century after century his words were to guide the faith of nations, to be commented on with years of careful study, and that his chance letters were to stand at the head of the sacred writings of the human race. Nothing of this could he foresee; but all this came. He seemed to be casting all reputation and influence forever away. But he was willing to lose them if he could attain that inward peace the outward expression of which had rested upon Stephen's brow; if he could find a sense of pardon; if he could feel that his soul was right with God; if he could escape from the galling yoke of sin,—for this he

would be willing to make the sacrifice, "Yea, doubtless," says he, long afterward, in speaking of his Jewish attainments thus renounced, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things; I count them as nothing that I may win Christ and be found in him, not having on my own righteousness, which is by the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." This divine righteousness, this seed of God planted in the heart, this love of God shed abroad in his soul—it was for the sake of this that he became a disciple of Jesus. It was necessary for Paul to have the aid of his fellow-Christians in passing through this awful crisis of his being, and Ananias was sent to pray with him. While he prayed the outward sight returned, and at the same moment, that inward strength and new life was given which was to do such a mighty work in the world.

Paul felt moved immediately to declare in public the great change in his convictions, and this immediately excited against him the deadly hostility of the Pharisaic party. To escape their vengeance he went into Arabia, and remained three years—how occupied we are not told; but it is easy to conjecture. For an intellect like his it was absolutely necessary to have time to arrange, make clear, and systematize his new views. No doubt he procured all the information which could be attained concerning the

life of Jesus and his teachings. In this operation he doubtless developed his system of Christian theology, — that first scientific expression to the intellect of that which all the Apostles held as a conviction and a life. Those three years, of which nothing is recorded, were of immense importance to the Christian church; for the views which Paul then attained enabled him to present and explain the gospel in its relations to Judaism and Heathenism, and to cause it to satisfy the wants of the intellect, as well as those of the heart and spirit.

Then he went to Jerusalem and saw the Apostles, but found they could give him no new light, nor add anything essentially important to his present knowledge. His former friends, the Pharisees, now his most bitter enemies, soon compelled him to leave Jerusalem. Praying one day in the Temple, it was borne in upon his mind that he was to go to the Gentiles and preach to them. Having been, therefore, only fourteen days in Jerusalem, he went to Tarsus, his former home, and spent some years in preaching the Gospel in that neighborhood. Of these years, also, as of those spent in Arabia, we have no record; for in the lives even of the greatest men, long years of continuous labor, of silent growth and development, are not spoken of; only *the days* are mentioned in which these years bear a visible fruit.

During this period, in which, during eight years from Stephen's death, there was no persecution, the number of converts to Christianity rapidly increased.

The conversion of Cornelius, the Roman Centurion, and his baptism by Peter, tended to prepare the Jews for the reception of Gentile converts. This first began to take place numerously in the great city of Antioch, which became the headquarters of Gentile Christianity, as Jerusalem was that of the Jewish Christians. Antioch was the metropolis of the East, situated in the north of Syria, and near the northeast corner of the Mediterranean Sea. It was governed by its own laws, and the Christians could there enjoy their worship undisturbed. As soon as these events occurred, Barnabas, a distinguished teacher, was sent from Jerusalem to Antioch, and he went directly to Tarsus to find Paul, and brought him to Antioch to labor with him there. There they staid a year, teaching ; and afterwards Paul and Barnabas began the missionary work, being sent out by the Church of Antioch to preach the Gospel. They sailed to the island of Cyprus, and there had for a disciple the Roman Proconsul. From Cyprus they sailed to the continent of Asia Minor and passed through the cities of Perga, Antioch in Asia Minor, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe, preaching in all these places, first to the Jews and then to the Greeks. In many of these places they were ill-treated ; in Lystra they were first worshipped as gods, and then the fickle people presently stoned them. In every place they gathered their converts into churches and taught them to choose elders, as in the synagogues, and then returned to Antioch. Thus ended the first missionary journey.



But now there began to manifest itself in the Christian Church that spirit of Jewish bigotry with which Paul was obliged to contend during his whole life. Some Pharisaic Christians came from Jerusalem, and declared that every Gentile who became a Christian must keep the whole Levitical law, or he could not be saved; i. e., if a Pagan or Roman or Greek became a Christian, he must become a Jew at the same time, — he must enter Christianity by the Jewish door. Paul and Barnabas opposed this doctrine; and so it was determined to send to Jerusalem to consult the Apostles there; and Paul and Barnabas went up for that purpose. It was now about twenty years after Christ's death. The result of this first Christian council was that the Gentiles need not be circumcised, but merely conform to a few regulations prescribed to the proselytes of the gate. The original letter of this council announcing this decision is preserved in the Book of Acts, and is the earliest public document of the Christian Church known to us.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This Apostolic Convention has been the subject of great discussion among the German critics, especially the followers of Baur. In fact, their contention that the Book of Acts is a "tendency-writing," intended to mediate between the Pauline and Jewish Christians, rests mainly on the supposed contradiction between this Convention as described in Acts, and the account given by Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians. The questions, however, discussed in the two are different. That debated in the Apostolic Council was, whether Gentiles must be circumcised, in order to be Christians. That to which Paul refers in Galatians, is, whether having been converted to Christianity, they were to be regarded as holding an inferior position to the Jews. The charge against Peter was not that he denied that they were Christians, but that he refused to eat with them.

After this it was "borne in" on Paul's mind, as the Quakers say, — or, to use his own language, "The Holy Ghost said," — that he should cross from Asia to Europe. It so happened that he sailed from the site of Old Troy to invade Europe, as the Greeks, a thousand years before, had sailed from Europe to invade Asia.

Next, Paul went from Philippi to Thessalonica, from Thessalonica to Berea, from Berea to Athens. He went round by sea. It was near the foot of Mt. Olympus that he went on board the vessel; and, as she gained the open sea, the snowy summits of that sacred mountain rose behind them in the pure sky. On the left, Mt. Athos was seen above the waters of the Thermaic Gulf. They pass the shores of Thessaly; they pass the long island of Eubœa; the shepherds on the heights above the vale of Tempe see the white sail, like a speck, creeping along the sea. They pass renowned Thermopylæ; they pass where the mountains look on Marathon and Marathon looks on the sea; they round the marbled steps of Sunium, the lofty promontory crowned with the temple of Minerva — a landmark to every vessel approaching Athens. The islands of Ægina and Salamis come in view. The top of Hymettus, behind Athens, is seen, and then the Apostle is landed in the Piræus and

In fact, Paul's rebuke to Peter rests on the implied assumption that the latter admitted the Christian character of the Gentile converts. Paul's argument in Galatians implies that some such decision as that recorded in Acts had been made. We shall recur to this question again.

enters Athens; not, as now, a heap of ruins, but still covered with its innumerable temples, statues, altars, — “the eye of Greece,” — with its great crowd of splendid buildings, unrivalled in art, and its groups of statues which the world is never weary of praising. Athens, when Paul entered it, was a great museum of art, history and religion.

What a moment was that! It was one of the turning-points in human history. The old gods of Greece, if they could have spoken from their majestic shrines, might have echoed the words of John the Baptist, and when they heard the name of Jesus spoken from Mars Hill have said: “He must increase, we must decrease.” “Whom ye *ignorantly* worship, Him declare I unto you,” said the Apostle. “*Ignorantly!*” Athens, which held the wisdom of the world, worshipping *ignorantly!* and to be enlightened by a Jew! No wonder they turned away, politely hiding their contempt by the civil remark, “We will hear thee again of this matter.” They did not and could not know that a greater man than their greatest, a man who was to influence the world more than Homer, or Plato, or Socrates, was then standing before them. There is something tragic in such meetings, where the vast significance of the hour is known to neither party; when such a great starry conjunction arrives, and the moment is carelessly dismissed like any other, as though it might return. But “the hour of visitation” passes, and comes back never again.

After this, Paul returned to Jerusalem, and in Jerusalem his life was in greater danger among the Jews, his brethren, than it ever was among the heathen. It seems from the Book of Acts, that both classes of Jews, those who were Christians and those who were not, were equally determined on his destruction. The apostles warned him, as soon as he reached Jerusalem, of his danger, and tried to help him to escape it by temporizing, — an expedient, which, like most such expedients, utterly failed of its effect. There were thousands of Jewish Christians in the city, we are told, all zealots for the Jewish law. They had consented, very reluctantly, that Gentile Christians need not become Jews ; but their tone and temper was such that the moment Paul said that Jesus had sent him as an apostle to the Gentiles, there was a universal outcry that he did not deserve to live. His presence of mind alone saved his life two or three times from their bitter hostility. The Roman guard in the Tower of Antonia saved him first, when the Jews had seized him, and were beating him to death. Rescued by the soldiers and taken into this fortress, he was about to be scourged by the governor's orders, when he saved himself from that cruelty by claiming his rights as a Roman citizen. Brought the next day before the Sanhedrim, he escaped being condemned to death by that body — a sentence which the Romans would probably have at once executed — by setting the party of the Pharisees against the Sadducees, declaring that the charge against him was for preaching

their own doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. He was again in danger of life from a body of forty men, who took a solemn vow not to eat nor drink till they had killed him. Whether they ever ate or drank again, we do not know; we know, however, that they did not kill him, for Paul, hearing of it, and telling the Roman military City Prefect, was sent under a guard to Cæsarea, to the headquarters of the governor of the province.

The agents of the Sanhedrim followed him there and accused him, and had a Roman lawyer with them, as counsel, to prosecute Paul in Latin. Felix kept him two years, and then left him with his successor, Festus. Festus proposed to send him to Jerusalem to take his trial before the Sanhedrim; but Paul, knowing that this would be equivalent to death, appealed, as a Roman citizen, to Cæsar, and demanded to be tried in Rome. If he had not been thus ready for every emergency, no doubt he would have fallen a victim to the bitter and malignant hatred of the Jews, and I am afraid we must add, of the Jewish Christians too. For the apostle James and thousands of Christians were living in Jerusalem all this time undisturbed. Paul's danger was not in being a Christian, but in being a liberal Christian, — one who demanded that the yoke of the Jewish law should be entirely broken, declaring the distinction of Jew and Gentile to be wholly done away in Christianity.

In Rome, the queen of the world, who among the philosophers, senators and haughty noblemen knew



what an historical event was occurring when Paul was brought, a chained prisoner, into her streets? The philosopher Seneca, the friend of the Emperor,—what would he have cared at being told, as he walked in the gardens of his splendid palace, that the champion of another obscure Jewish sect had that day arrived in the city? Seneca may possibly have seen Paul, for the latter speaks of an audience in the palace.<sup>1</sup> But the wise Stoic would hardly have deigned to waste a thought on the man whose words were to prostrate the whole system of things of which he was a part. Paul, while a prisoner at Rome, probably wrote the epistle to the Philippians. In this he speaks of his labors in preaching the Gospel, and his hopes of being speedily released. If we accept an ancient tradition, supported by a passage in Clement of Rome, who may have been one of Paul's disciples; this hope was realized; and he travelled into Spain and other places, and possibly saw again some of his Grecian churches. According to this view, he was again imprisoned, and sent once more to Rome, where he suffered martyrdom. It was during this second imprisonment that he was supposed to have written the second letter to Timothy, in which he declares that the hour of his departure is at hand: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

<sup>1</sup> See the note in the Appendix, on the traditional story of the meeting of Paul and Seneca.

Well might he say so ! As Paul the aged, thinking of his whole career, might he not well feel that his life had been thorough, complete and full ? What a circle of experience had he gone through since as a Jewish boy he studied at the feet of Gamaliel ! He, in his single person, had lived four lives, either of which would have been sufficient to render the name of any man immortal. A life of profound thought, which had evolved a system of theology which was to rule the minds of the wisest men through long centuries. A life of incessant action, full of labors, journeys, and cares for the increase of the churches. A life of wonderful spiritual experiences, such as no other man had known ; caught up into the third heaven, and enjoying the sight of things unutterable by mortal tongue. A life of martyrdom, in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft ; five times tortured by Jewish stripes, thrice beaten with rods, and once stoned. Such was the life of Paul, so rich, so full, so various ; full of deep trials, full of solemn joys ; exemplifying everywhere the power of faith in the unseen and eternal. Whatever he did was accomplished by the power of his faith : “ The life I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God. I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.” Paul’s supernatural conversion did not, indeed, create or destroy any faculty of his nature. The divine illumination awakened all his powers to full activity. His inspiration appeared in the increased activity of

his being ; instead of destroying his nature, it developed it in its minutest traits, and the influence of a universal faith and a universal spirit gave tenfold activity to his individual character. But what an amount of power came to him from this inspiration ! It changed the direction of his whole life ; it infused incalculable energies of hope and will into his being ; it gave him an aim infinitely precious to his heart, and inexhaustible power wherewith to pursue it. In contemplating such a life, must we not say that the greatest happiness that can befall a man in this world is to have faith ? — faith in the unseen and eternal ; faith in God's truth and love ; a faith like his, which works by love, and purifies both heart and life, more and more, forever.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE INSPIRATION OF PAUL.

WE come now to consider the Inspiration of Paul. This inquiry is necessary before we can properly examine his writings. If, for example, we believe that he was so inspired as to be incapable of error, we must accept all he says, as from God,—even when he seems to contradict the fundamental teachings of Jesus, the dictates of sound reason, or even his own teachings in other places. Our freedom of inquiry being thus hampered, we lose our interest in the investigation. But if we regard his inspiration as an influence which led him up to the loftiest truth, but which did not destroy the freedom of his mind, nor obliterate his past opinions, we shall find great interest in seeing how these new and living convictions gradually emancipated him from his old prejudices, and how, according to the promise of Jesus, he was “guided into all truth.”

What then do we mean by inspiration?

There are two ways by which thought and knowledge come to us, — from without, and from within.

One class of men, and that the largest, gather their knowledge mostly from without, — by observation, experience of life, or mingling with men and things. Thus they grow wise, always acquiring some new knowledge of nature or of man from the world around.

Another class of men seem to have a fountain of thought within; ideas flow into their minds from some hidden source. They are poets, artists, inventors, discoverers, seers, prophets. They are often possessed by an idea which drives them forward, regardless of outward consequences. Many of this class fall by the wayside and are trodden down. They write books which no one reads, paint pictures which no one buys, bore their friends with their hobbies which no one takes an interest in, fight for impracticable reforms, devote their lives to inventions which never come to anything, preach theories which no one attends to. These are men of imperfect inspiration, — a feeble stream which is soon lost in the sand.

But sometimes men come with an inspiration so strong that it carries them forward, in spite of all opposition, till they triumph. These are reformers like Luther, founders of religions like Buddha and Mohammed, discoverers like Columbus, inventors like Fulton. They follow an inward light, whether men will hear or forbear, and at last they see the work of their hands, and are satisfied. So Howard the philanthropist finally overcame the dead



resistance of stupidity, self-interest, and prejudice. So Garrison conquered the mighty combination which upheld slavery.

The essential fact of inspiration is the same in all such men. They all follow an inward light, an idea, a conviction in their own soul. They did not make this idea; it came to them. It haunts them when awake; mingles with their dreams. If they try to escape from it, it pursues them. If they succeed, they are called men of genius, heroes, prophets; if they fail, they are called fanatics, and men say to them, "Thou art beside thyself; much learning hath made thee mad."

The kinds and degrees of inspiration are various. At the summit of all is religious inspiration; and far above all other kinds of religious inspiration is Christian inspiration. Mohammed, Buddha, Confucius, Zoroaster, were no doubt inspired men; they saw in their souls some divine truths. But while the races and nations taught by these masters have been imperfectly developed, the best and highest civilization of mankind has been fed by Christianity. A few plain men, quite ignorant of everything but the gospel of love, were able to establish a religion which in a few centuries overturned Paganism, and took possession of the Roman empire. For eighteen centuries this religion has been associated with everything progressive and ennobling in the history of our race; with all that restrains the tyrant, and consoles the wretched.

The root and essence of this inspiration was the same in all the disciples and apostles. It was the idea of Christ, formed in their souls. This was the common universal inspiration of all Christians.

The doctrine of the spirit and spiritual influence in Christianity differed greatly from the spiritualism of other religions. In the Jewish religion, the word of the Lord seldom came except to prophets and seers, who were raised up from time to time. Among the Hindoos, only the caste of Brahmins are counted capable of receiving this divine influx. The system of the Buddhists, the Platonists, and other philosophies and theosophies declares that to commune with God one must leave the world, live alone, and deny the pleasures of sense. But Christianity limits this heavenly influence to no priestly caste, to no saintly aristocracy. It is for all who need it, all who ask for it. The divine ocean of love is ready to flow into every heart which is open to receive it. "Ask and receive," said Jesus; "seek, and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you."

The influence of the Holy Spirit is not a mystical influence. It is mysterious only as Nature is mysterious; it is mysterious as the human soul is mysterious, as the life of plants is mysterious. The source of all life is a mystery; but as soon as life begins, it comes under law, and becomes part of a great order. Mystery therefore is a part of nature, and to believe in mystery does not interfere with practice, with prudence, with good sense, with outward usefulness. But

mysticism does interfere with all these. Mysticism interferes with the conduct of the understanding. It despises logic; it antagonizes the reflective intellect. It lives by intuition alone, never correcting its intuitions by observation and reflection; and thus is morbid, because leaving important faculties unused.

Now, when we open the Book of Acts we shall see that the spiritualism of the Apostles was not mysticism. It did not take them away from life, but carried them into life. They were no visionaries nor dreamers; they were neither monks nor hermits. They were the most practical men then living in the Roman empire; for they had the greatest work to do, saw most clearly what it was and how it was to be done, and were doing it with their whole might. Nor did they undervalue the reason. While living in the spirit and walking in the spirit, they were always ready to give an account of their faith, to defend it by facts and arguments. He was surely no mystic who defended himself before Felix and Herod at Jerusalem, who argued with Stoics and Epicureans at Athens, and pleaded before Cæsar at Rome. In apostolic times, when the whole life of the church was in the Holy Ghost, nothing could be more practical and nothing more full of intellectual activity. No morbid mysticism had in those days affected it.

This spiritualism in the apostolic church was not partialism. The Holy spirit came to all, and dwelt in all. It was not an eminent piety belonging to a

few; it did not make an oligarchy of saints, but it made saints of the whole body. The doctrine of election did not teach that some were chosen to be holy, and that the others were passed by. It taught that God had *chosen them all*—all to whom his word came—to become his children and to receive his influence. The Holy Spirit was in every heart, to make a universal brotherhood, to unite them all in bonds of sympathy and good will.

In the beginning, this was the inspiration common to all Christians. It gave to all of them faith, hope, love, courage, patience, submission; it gave them peace in the midst of storms, joy amid trials, life in the hour of death. It was a life within the soul, making all things new.

But this inspiration took a different form in each man, according to his genius and character. The inspiration of Paul was unlike that of John. Paul was more speculative; John more meditative; James more practical; Peter more of a churchman. These differences appear in the epistles of each writer. Agreeing in essentials, each of them loving and serving Christ, each teaches Christianity in his own way. The law of spiritual life in Christ Jesus is a law of freedom; and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. The inspiration of each man is an indwelling life, intensifying all his powers, but not destroying his individuality.

We may remark here that writings like these suffer much by being cut up into chapters and verses.

Take the most brilliant speech or poem of modern days and divide it thus, and how the life would be taken out of it! Put one of Macaulay's reviews or Carlyle's essays into chapters, and then put each sentence by itself into a verse, and we should hardly understand its meaning, much less be moved by its glowing and pathetic eloquence. An obscure passage of Paul sometimes becomes at once plain if you read on, regardless of these divisions.

The inspiration of Paul, Peter, or John does not consist in their saying what has never been said before. When Socrates was about to die, one of his friends remarked that the hard thing about it was, that he should be punished so unjustly; whereupon Socrates answered, "What! would you prefer that I should suffer deservedly for some crime?" Peter says the same thing: "It is better, if the will of God be so, that ye should suffer for well doing rather than for evil doing." How happened it that these disciples, who had never read Plato nor studied in any school, untaught fishermen of the lake, should have been able to utter sayings like those of Socrates, Epictetus, or Antoninus? Once in a few hundred years such men of genius come; they do not come in such groups as these. In rare moments, the select souls of the earth utter words which the world embalms and preserves in immortal memory. But here are Peter and James and John, not remarkable at first, called from their boats to become the teachers of mankind; and all of them leave some writing



containing texts of thought, expressions going down deep into human experience, lofty appeals to whatever is most noble in the soul. Some remarkable influence, some common inspiration, must have acted upon them all to draw from their hearts such sacred music. This influence, they say, was Christ formed within them, the hope of glory. Or, as it is elsewhere expressed, "We all, beholding the glory of our Master as in a mirror, are changed into the same image, rising from glory into a still higher glory by the continued influence of our Master's spirit" (2 Cor. iii. 18).

There is another remarkable fact about the inspiration of the New Testament writers. They teach us no system; they have no common creed; each is individual, and has his own original way of thinking and writing; and yet there is a vital harmony of opinion among them all. Some organizing principle, working from the centre out, determines the mutual relation of their thoughts, and brings them into unity. Their thoughts are harmonized by the unity of the spirit into a bond of peace. As in a great concert each instrument gives its own melody, and has its separate tone, some playing one part and some another, and yet none make any discord in their difference, thus these New Testament writers strike separate notes of Christian truth, but in a vital consent and final concert of sweetest harmony.

Among them all Paul stands distinct for the affluence of his thought. He overflows with an exuber-

ance of ideas; he has an infinite variety. Now he argues with a compact logic, as in the Epistle to the Romans; now he speaks with burning indignation or sad severity, as in the letter to the Galatians; again he bursts into a wild strain of pathetic eloquence, of tender appeal, of warm affection; then rises into some vision of the final triumph and glory of Christian truth. From this height he descends again to give careful advice in practical matters, — about going to law, about marriage, eating or abstaining from unclean meats, about divorce, about partaking of the Lord's supper in the right way, about women wearing a veil on their heads in praying or preaching. He gives minute advice as to how long or how often men should use the gift of tongues; urges the superior advantage of distinct and clear instruction; gives suggestions on the best way of taking up a collection. Once more, in the midst of all these practical matters, he suddenly soars upward into the highest heaven of divine vision, and sings a seraphic hymn to love. All this in a single letter to Corinth.

Observe also in Paul the rare union of qualities usually found in opposition to each other, — ardent enthusiasm with fine discrimination, earnest conviction with generous liberality. With the strongest belief, he is not narrow, not one-sided; with uncompromising convictions and inflexible purpose, he is not intolerant of differences. He endures repeatedly the cruel torture of the scourge and rod rather than go a step backward or concede one point of the truth.

Yet in all unessential matters he gives way ; commands submission to the Roman Government ; urges paying taxes and obeying the laws ; and this, he says, should be done not merely from fear of punishment, but as a religious duty. He says, "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing ;" to obey the commandments of God is everything. "The kingdom of God is not meat nor drink, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." As to the Sabbath, he who keeps it because he thinks he ought to do so, does well ; he who disregards the Sabbath, because he thinks he ought not to keep it, is equally obedient to God in this course. He who conscientiously eats meat offered to idols does right ; he who conscientiously abstains also does right. We are not to judge each other. It is not ours to decide between a man's conscience and his God. We are all standing at every moment before a higher judgment-seat than that of man ; we are being judged, while we speak and act, by God. Thus, what Luther demanded, fifteen centuries after, for every soul,—the right of private judgment,—Paul, following Christ, demanded then : every soul is to stand alone before God, and must decide and act for itself.

But Paul teaches no mere individualism. His doctrine of private judgment and personal freedom does not exclude union, brotherly fellowship, and intimate, constant co-operation. We are all, he says, members of one body. If one member suffers, all suffer ; if one is prosperous, all prosper. God gives

to each man a separate gift, altogether his own; yet he is to use it for the common good. He frequently returns to this comparison of the Christian community to a living organization, with various limbs, senses, faculties, all working together for a common end. In this also we see the balance and equipoise given by the fulness of his inspiration.

The fountain and essence of this inspiration was an inward sight of the Christ in his essential character. It was to see that idea in the mind of Jesus which made of him the true Christ. This was the inspiration of the Spirit which Jesus himself foretold and promised, according to the Fourth Gospel (John xiv. 16-20, 26, 28; xvi. 13-16, &c.). He told his disciples that the Father would send them the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth which should dwell in them; and then immediately added that he himself would come to them, and fill them with life, and make them see that he was living in them, and that they were living in him. This spiritual influence would enable them to remember whatever he had told them. His word was to abide in them. When the Spirit of Truth came he would guide them into all truth, taking the ideas of Jesus and showing them to his disciples. The essential inspiration of Christians, therefore, was to have the gospel of their Master made a living conviction in their souls, out of which would be unfolded in due proportion the truths involved in it. It was to be *shown* to them. It was an inward sight of the Fatherly love as it was seen by Jesus. It was not

therefore, the communication of any belief or proposition to the understanding. All inspiration is of this sort,—an inward *sight*. Inspiration is not infallibility. What we see is limited by our deficiency of vision, and our report of it obscured by our poverty of expression. Nor is it stationary, but progressive; since we can see more and more of truth, and see it more deeply and fully. Nor is it pure thought, or abstraction. It is not dry light; it is insight, permeated with affection, and flowing out into action.

The inspiration of Paul, as described by himself, corresponds with this view. It was Christ revealed in him: “When it pleased God to reveal His Son in me” (Gal. i. 15); “Christ within, the hope of glory” (Col. i. 27); “Our life is hid with Christ in God” (Col. iii. 3); “The life I now live I live by faith in the Son of God” (Gal. ii. 20); “God hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. iv. 6). It was essentially a revelation of the divine love to all men; given freely (grace), given to sinners (forgiveness), and thus creating an answering love to God, and brotherly love to man.

We shall see, in the case of Paul, that this inspiration by no means interfered with the freest action of his mind; did not abolish or change at once his old opinions; left in him many traces of his Jewish beliefs; and only gradually “transformed him by the renewing of his mind” (Rom. xii. 2). Such a great spiritual influence stimulates the idiosyncrasy of each



apostle. It makes Peter, James, John, and Paul, not more alike, but more different. The lower down men are, and the less developed they are, the more alike they are. The law of growth is from the homogeneous, through differentiation, into harmony, — first similarity, then variety, and at last variety in unity.

This great influence developed the peculiarities of Paul in many directions. He had a prophetic, far-reaching vision. He saw Christianity as it was to be; not in its then poor beginnings, but in its great fulfilment. He looked not at the things seen and temporal, but at the things not seen and eternal (2 Cor. iv. 18). How full his language is of a vast hope! There is nothing small in his conceptions; everything is on a large scale. His statements are comprehensive; not one-sided nor narrow, but yet full of discrimination. In the ardor and rush of his ideas, he maintains the equipoise of his thought. He is not swept away by his excitement into vagueness or repetition; but follows his own rule, that "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets" (1 Cor. xiv. 32). He wishes first of all, and always, to be intelligible. He asks, What is the use of your speaking, if you are not understood? No doubt it is a great thing to be inspired; but Paul says that if the inspired man speaks in mysterious language so that no one understands him, he may do himself good, but he does no good to any one else. You might as well, he suggests,

blow at random through a flute, or run your fingers carelessly over a harp. Pray with the understanding as well as with the spirit! Sing with the understanding, as well as with the spirit! Thus practical was his mind. It were well if our public speakers, preachers, and singers would study attentively this fourteenth chapter of Corinthians; so full is it of common sense.

But the power of Paul was in his perpetual ideality. What a small affair were these dozen Christian churches, scattered through Greece and Asia Minor! But Paul saw in them the seed of the most wonderful future. His mind lived in that great future, in that majestic hope.

Notice also the precision of his language. Each phrase has its own exact meaning; every word tells; he uses no vague generalities. Here are one or two instances: In one letter he points out the distinction between the Jewish and Greek character in matters of religion. The Jews, he says, love power, the Greeks love truth; one wishes for marvellous signs, the other for subtle intellectual statements. But Christ, he says, brings both (1 Cor. i. 22); there is in the Gospel power to convert the world, and also wisdom to teach the world. Again, he indicates the place and purpose of theology. You cannot, he says, find God by theology. The world by wisdom knew not God. No philosophy, no logic, no metaphysics, can make us see God. The pure in heart see God. Simplicity of soul finds God. There is a divine folly, as men call it,

wiser than wisdom, stronger than strength. "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and things that are not to bring to nought things that are." And yet, when the point is to meet objections, to reply to arguments, to answer the questions of those who need clear thought, Paul throws his whole mind into his reasoning, and leaves no doctrinal question unexamined, no theological problem unsolved.

Here, again, we see the remarkable equipoise in this exceptional soul of intuition and reason, — of pure spiritual insight, and unceasing struggle for the ultimate truth which can be reached by thought alone. Ardent emotion is joined with cool discretion. The essence of all truth is seen by a little child in a single moment; but there are heights of knowledge to be scaled which years of thought alone can reach. Paul has entire faith that all truth can be found, all known, the last end reached, the full insight gained. There is no agnosticism in Paul. Consider this wonderful prayer which he offers for the humble Christians in Ephesus, who are still so undeveloped that he is obliged to exhort them not to steal, not to lie, not to be drunk, to avoid coarse and licentious conduct, foolish tattling, corrupt and corrupting language. Low down as they were, untaught as they were, he could yet hope and pray for them in such words as these: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Master, Jesus Christ, that ye may be inwardly

strengthened mightily by his spirit; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend what is the length and breadth and depth and height, and know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph. iii. 14).

This is his grand idea of the possibility of progress; of moral, spiritual, intellectual culture. The root and ground of all is love — simple, self-forgetting, generous love. That is the seed out of which all shall grow. If we have this love, then Christ, who is love, dwells in our hearts. Then the prospect of infinite progress opens before us. Then we shall be able to comprehend the Gospel in all its four dimensions of length, breadth, depth, and height. Its length,—that is, its far reaching progress, its ever advancing power, its ever new developments in the human soul, human history, and the life of the church. Its breadth,—that is, its comprehensive nature, drawing together and bringing into harmony man and God, nature and revelation, reason and faith, this life and the next, time and eternity, all earthly blessings and all spiritual hopes. Its depth,—that is, its being able at last to solve all problems, to discover the final answer to all questions, to gain a profound apprehension of first principles, an insight into the roots and sources of all being. Its height,—that is, the ascent to God, the communion with divine love, the conquest of good over evil, the sitting in heavenly places with Christ,

the communion with the spirits of the just made perfect, and being filled with all the fulness of God.

What faith the apostle had in the capacity of man and the power of the Gospel, when he could pray such a prayer for his disciples! What a hope for the whole human race illumined his heart amid the sad hours of his lonely prison! In none of his letters does he reach so lofty a tone, in none does he see visions of such a triumphant future as in those written from his prison in Cæsarea to the Colossians and Ephesians, and from his prison in Rome to the Philippians. His faith then becomes prophecy, — a far-reaching vision of the entire conquest of good over evil, and the ultimate redemption of every human soul. As he approached the end of his life, the galling Roman chain freezing on his stiff limbs, with hardly a companion or friend near him, the churches he had founded still full of evils, and new forms of error springing up in their midst, he became more certain of the triumph of good over all evil. Language seemed hardly adequate to furnish him with expression for this faith. He heaps epithet on epithet, as when he speaks of “the abundant grace,” which “through the thanksgiving of many” should “redound to the glory of God.” So he says that the Ephesians shall have “the spirit of wisdom,” and of “revelation” in “the knowledge of Christ;” their “minds being filled with light,” so as “to know the hope of God’s calling and the riches of his glory, and



the greatness of his power;" and teaches how God has set Christ above every power and principality, every might and dominion in this world and all coming worlds; making him full of the fulness of God, who is all in all.

He sees in Christ perfect power, a pleroma of truth, ability to bring all discords into harmony, and to dissolve by his divine love and goodness the evils and woes of all worlds. But, though this conviction becomes so habitual with Paul in his last days, it was not new to him. Long before, when writing to Corinth from Ephesus, he had declared that Christ must reign till all things were subject to him; that is, till all evil was conquered by good. But then he adds, still maintaining the supremacy of the Father: "When all things are subject to him, the Son also himself shall be subject to him who did put all things under him, that God may be all in all." Christianity itself will come to an end by its very success. For, with all his devotion to Christ, Paul never for a moment thought of him as approaching to any equality with the supreme and infinite Father.

The faith of Paul in regard to the Eternal One is just as vitally and centrally true for us now as it was for the narrow Jew and vague Gnostic of his own day.

At present, the prevailing tendencies of thought are toward Agnosticism and Pantheism. All the truth there is in both these theories Paul saw, but saw a deeper truth below each of them. The Agnostic says

we cannot know God at all. Paul declares we cannot know him thoroughly nor comprehend him, and yet we can know him. "To know," says he, "the love which surpasses knowledge;" "God dwells in inaccessible light;" "No man hath seen God, nor can see him." That the finite can never comprehend the Infinite is a statement which needs no proof. But that we may know many things we cannot comprehend is also very certain. We not only know God, but we probably know him more certainly than anything else in the universe, since "in him we live and move and have our being." Nor is there any truth in Pantheism unstated by Paul. He says: "From him and through him and to him are all things;" "He is the fulness that fills all in all." Yet Paul never teaches that everything is God, which is the false Pantheism; but that he is "above all and through all and in us all." Paul does not say that all things are God, but that God is in all things.

Was there ever a spirit, except that of the Master, which went as deep, and soared as high, and reached out as far as this? Yet how near to us all he is still; how his words comfort, uphold, and strengthen us to-day! How his advice helps us, his sympathy cheers us! He who put on the whole armor of God helps us to hope that one day we may wear the same perfect panoply. He encourages our hope to share in our measure that heavenly inspiration which has made him one of the great teachers of the human race.

A question which naturally arises here is this: If the inspiration of Paul did not save him from error and mistakes, how are we to distinguish between the inspired sight and utterance of truth and those imperfect or erroneous statements which came from his old opinions, mistaken reasoning, or failing memory? How distinguish the inspired part of his teaching from the uninspired?

The answer is that no such sharp line can be drawn. How do we distinguish in a poem that which is truly poetical from that which is prosaic? There is no exact rule by which it can be done. Each man's own poetic feeling must decide.

We can only recognize inspiration in another by the same spirit in ourselves. But the best test of inspiration is that it gives vitality and unity. It produces a coherent whole, and organizes into one living conviction the various themes of thought. This is "the unity of the Spirit." The Spirit also quickens, makes alive. In all writing there is a living part and a dead part. The description of love in 1 Cor. xiii. is vital, throbbing with life; the argument about Sarah and Hagar (Galatians iv. 21) is palpably from the uninspired part of the apostle's mind, — a reminiscence of his former Rabbinical doctrine.

Inspired truth is full of vital power. It sinks deep into the springs of being in the soul. It quickens understanding, imagination, and love. It brings forth fruit. It creates character, alters belief, expels prejudice, builds up communities.

As Paul preached faith in the living Jesus, the Son of God and Son of Man, churches were organized, new morals and manners arrived, a new hope and energy entered the human heart. The inspired truth in the teaching of Paul centres around two themes, — Christ in the heart, and Christ in the life.

Since writing this I have met with the following sentences in Goethe, which express very nearly the same idea, and coming from such a source are quite significant. They are to be found in the 12th Book of "*Aus meinen Leben.*" He says that in his study of the Bible, his plan was to find the fundamental central thought, and to regard that as the key to the whole.

"In all traditions," he goes on to say, "especially written traditions, all depends on the inner sense, the main purpose of the work. This contains the element which is truly original, divine, effective, impregnable, and indestructible. This original central conviction remains unchanged by time and unaffected by outward circumstances, just as a fair pure soul is untouched by the diseases of the body. The body of a work is its language, dialect, peculiar style and letter, — and all this is exposed to change and decay.

"It is our business, then, to seek always the inmost element of a writing, and especially that part which corresponds to our own inward experience, and which most entirely vitalizes our own thought and character. The external part we can hand over to the critic, who, though he may succeed in demolishing

the shell, can never rob us of that central living kernel, nor for a single moment cause us to doubt its worth and reality.

“This principle lies at the foundation of my whole literary activity, and has been my capital, from which I have drawn supplies for all my work. This principle enabled me to understand and enjoy the Bible. I was no longer perplexed by the differences in these books. My interest in this volume was too great to allow me to dispense with the study of it. No matter how free were my criticisms, I never lost sight of this most wholesome canon: *The Evangelists may contradict each other to any extent, provided the Gospel never contradicts itself.*”



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE MISSIONARY PERIOD.

THE first epoch in Paul's life as a Christian is the Missionary period. As soon as he was converted he was seized with the desire of preaching his new gospel. It was a *gospel*, that is, *good news*; and every one who hears a piece of good news wishes to tell it. What a pleasure in communicating that which will make all men happy! The joy of the message reacts on the bearer, and he seems to himself and to others glorified in the happiness which he imparts. It is not therefore benevolence alone which prompts men to announce a gospel, but even self-love may make them enjoy the distinction which it gives them. One of my earliest recollections as a child was of seeing a man on horseback, riding rapidly up the avenue to the front door of our house, crying out, "Peace! Peace!" and then riding away to communicate his gospel to others. He brought to us the news of the Treaty of peace between Great Britain and the United States signed at Ghent, Dec. 24, 1814, which reached America Feb.

14, 1815. So true are the words of the prophet: "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good."

It is always pleasant to bring good news; but when this good news makes men not only happier but better, — when it brings a cure for the diseases of the soul, health to a decaying society, new life to a dying world, — what joy to be the bearer of such tidings! Therefore Paul said, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." It would be to him disaster and sorrow to give up the work which exposed him to so much hatred, persecution, toil, and suffering. He could bear all these — amply recompensed by the grateful love of his converts, and the consciousness of doing so much good.

What was the substance of his gospel, and why was it such good tidings?

It was that the great Messiah, long-expected King of Peace and Justice, had at last been born; that he had endured the sufferings and death foreseen and predicted by the prophet; that he had risen from death into a higher life, and would soon appear as Son of God and Son of Man. He had sent out his apostles to call men into his Kingdom, in which they could find pardon, peace and hope. "Believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, and God will put his spirit into your hearts, by which you will say, Father! Then you will be safe; safe from all danger and evil, in the hands of a protecting God."

The long age of force, cruelty, tyranny, was near its end. The new age of Peace, Purity, Love, was about to begin. No wonder that those who believed in this prophecy were filled with joy, and became subjects of the new King.

But why did they believe it? Why did these Gentiles, Greeks of Asia and Europe, Romans of Italy and the provinces—why did they accept a Jewish Messiah? For two reasons: first, because it was an unbelieving age, in which the old faiths had died out, and left emptiness.<sup>1</sup> Such an epoch is longing for something to believe, and is prepared to accept anything which gives new vitality to its stagnant spirit. And the other reason was the strength of conviction of these Jewish apostles. The man who believes always has a great influence on the man who has no belief. Faith produces faith. The Jews already exercised a power over the Roman mind because, in an age of unbelief, they were the one people who believed. To a hopeless world, they had already communicated something of their own expectation of a coming Messiah.<sup>2</sup> Clinging with a dogged obstinacy to their law and their traditions, their Sabbath and Scripture, they seemed the only nation in the world to whom religion was a reality;

<sup>1</sup> For the unbelief of the first century see Renan, "*Les Apôtres*," chap. xvii. "*Etat du monde vers le milieu du premier siècle.*" Also see Neander, vol. i.

<sup>2</sup> Tacitus, *Hist.* v. 13; Suetonius, *Life of Vespasian*. "An old and persistent opinion moved the whole East, that, at that time, some power proceeding from Judea would possess the whole world."

not merely a part of public politics, or of pleasant literary allusion. The apostle Paul had this strength of conviction in the highest degree, freed from the hard shell of Jewish ritual. Wherever he went, men saw in him one to whom the most lovely faith was more real than the outside world of fact and law; to whom the things seen were fugitive and ephemeral, the things not seen substantial and eternal. "On all sides," says Renan,<sup>1</sup> "was energetically manifested the need of a monotheistic religion, founding morality on divine law. It was an epoch in which naturalistic religions, reduced to utter childishness, to jugglery and sorcery, could no longer meet the needs of human society, which longed for a moral and philosophic religion. In India and Persia this want was met by Buddhism and the system of Zoroaster. In the Greek world the Orphic poets and the Mysteries had tried in vain to satisfy this demand. At the epoch we have reached, the problem was proposed to mankind with a certain solemn unanimity and an imperial grandeur."

The fundamental statement of Paul, the main proposition in his preaching, was this: "Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of God."<sup>2</sup> What was the meaning and value of this proposition?

<sup>1</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>2</sup> This appears equally from the Book of Acts and the Pauline letters. See Acts ix. 20, 22, —where, directly after his conversion, Paul preaches at Damascus that Jesus is the Son of God, and proves him to be the Christ; Acts xvii. 2, —at Thessalonica, where he teaches that the Christ must suffer and rise, and that this Jesus

The Jewish faith in a Messiah, or Christ, was in One to come who should combine the offices of prophet, priest, and king. He was the anointed one,—king and priest.<sup>1</sup> He was to be prophet like Moses, king like David, and priest like Melchizedek. As prophet, he would reveal divine truth; as king, govern the world with divine justice; as priest, reconcile man to God. Sometimes one, and sometimes another of these views was emphasized. Sometimes it was Power; and he was to be a great Ruler, like David, making the Jewish nation the conquering people, supreme over the Gentiles. Sometimes it was Priest; and then the Temple and its altar would be the shrine where the whole world should come to worship. And sometimes the Prophetic character was made most prominent, and the Messiah would then be a revealer of heavenly truth.

When this Messiah comes, the present age will end, and the new age begin.<sup>2</sup> In the present age (*ἐν τούτῳ τῷ αἰῶνι*), which is an age of darkness (*τοῦ σκούτους τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου*," Eph. vi. 12), Force, Fraud, and War are the rulers. In the next age, the age to come (*ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι*, Matt. xii. 32; Heb. vi. 5; &c.),

is the Christ; Acts xviii. 5, — at Corinth, where he declares that Jesus is the Christ.

<sup>1</sup> Kings in ancient times were also priests. So Virgil, "Rex idem, et regi Turno gratissimus augur."

<sup>2</sup> The meaning of the New Testament has been much obscured by the translation of these words in the authorized version "this world" and "the world to come." The Revised version puts "age" in the margin.



divine justice will rule, peace conquer war, evil be overcome with good. Therefore the coming age is called the "Kingdom of God," and "Kingdom of Heaven." The glowing language of the Jewish prophets described the glories of this approaching time,<sup>1</sup> which would be introduced by the appearance (*παρουσία*) of the Messiah, at the end of the present age. ("What shall be the sign of thy coming," — appearance, manifestation, — "and the end of the age?" Matt. xxiv. 3.)

This Coming Age was the great hope and expectation of the Jewish people. It was the theme of their Apocalyptic literature. It pervades the New Testament. It is the main subject of the teaching of Jesus. The Sermon on the Mount lays down the laws and spirit of the new age, — the Kingdom of Heaven. The parables mostly turn on the nature of the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus fully agreed with the Jewish teachers that the old age was coming to an end, that the new age was about to begin, that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, that it was to be in this world and the present life. The central petition of the Lord's prayer is, not that our souls may be saved in the future life, but that God's Kingdom may come here, and His will be done on earth, making a heaven below like the heaven above. He differed from the Jewish leaders only as to the character and methods

<sup>1</sup> See Isaiah xi., xxxv., xl., xlix., lii., lv., etc., the images of which came to Virgil through the Sibylline verses, and were reproduced in his Fourth Eclogue, and afterwards in Pope's Messiah.

of the Kingdom. They believed that it was to be outward and political, upheld by miraculous signs, and divine power. They expected it as a kingdom of force, like that of Rome; only the force would be in the hands of the Jews and not in that of the Gentiles. The Jews would be the masters, and the Romans slaves. Their principle was exactly the one afterwards carried out by Mohammed, — that other races must become either converts or subjects to the chosen people. The temples of the idols would fall, the religions of idolatry pass away, and the worship of Jehovah, in His Temple at Jerusalem, be the sacred centre of the world.

The teaching of Jesus was the exact opposite of this. The age to come, the Kingdom of Heaven, was to be the reign of love and truth, not of force and authority. It would not be established by miraculous signs and wonders. "A wicked generation seeks for a sign." The only sign would be one like that of Jonah, — apparent defeat and overthrow. His first words blessed "the poor in spirit," "the meek," "the pure in heart," "the peace-makers." His "coming," or manifestation as King, was not to be outward and local, but inward and pervasive; it was to be the power proceeding from his truth and love to convince and convert the world. It was not to be "Lo, here!" or "Lo, there!" but within them, in their midst. It would not come with observation, but as the rain and dew from heaven. He told Pilate that he was King, because he came to bear witness to the truth.

In his effort to convince the Jewish leaders that the true Kingdom of God was of this spiritual order, he went to his death — confident, however, that through his death, this divine reign would be accomplished. “I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.”

This was the doctrine preached by the missionaries, — by Paul to the Greeks, no less than by Peter to the Jews. The great age of peace and truth was at hand, and Jesus, the crucified, was to appear as King of justice and love. The condition of becoming a member of this Kingdom was faith in Jesus as the Christ; that is, faith that truth and love are to conquer force, and that he who died for others is to become master of mankind. It was therefore faith that truth must conquer error, right overcome wrong, evil be defeated by goodness. Therefore all who named the name of Christ must depart from iniquity; for not every one who says to Jesus, Lord! Lord! shall enter into his Kingdom, but those who do the will of his Heavenly Father. All who have this faith, and will show it by their works, shall see God as Father and Friend, lay down the burden of sin, have nothing to fear in this age or any other, but be safe in the midst of a despairing epoch and a decaying world.

This Parousia, or coming of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, was not any “Second Coming” as it has usually been called<sup>1</sup> for there is nothing in the New Testament about a second coming. During his life, Jesus had not come as the Christ, the King; he

<sup>1</sup> See “Orthodoxy, its Truths and Errors,” chapter xiii.

was to become so through his rising up from the grave, and being the source of life and power to all his followers. When he was seen to be Christ, and acknowledged as such by Jew and Gentile, that would be his parousia, manifestation, revelation, and coming.

No doubt Paul and the other apostles believed that this coming would be with observation, — a magnificent revelation, accompanied with mighty signs on earth and in heaven. This is the picture given in the Apocalypse ascribed to John, and called the Book of Revelation. This book states that it contains a description of “the things which must shortly come to pass;” and it is a wonderfully poetical and figurative description of the overthrow of the Jewish hierarchy and the Roman empire, amid unutterable woes, and the final establishment of Christianity, or the Kingdom of Heaven, the New Jerusalem. This great and terrible consummation, the end of the old age and the beginning of the new, was soon to come to pass. The apostles had a right to believe this, for Jesus had distinctly said, when speaking of his coming, “This generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled;” and again, “There be some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Kingdom of God.” That the apostles also (at least at first) took in too literal a sense the figures and images by which their Master had described his Parousia, or manifestation, is apparent. He had told them he was coming in the clouds of heaven, with his angels, with

the sound of a trumpet (Matt. xxiv. 30 ; Mark xiii. 36 ; Luke xxi. 27). Paul, in the first period of his teaching, seems to have taken this literally (1 Thess. iv. 16) ; though in his later letters such descriptions cease, and instead of speaking of Christ's coming, he desires to depart and be with Christ (Phil. i. 23), and is already sitting with him in heavenly places (Eph. ii. 6). That Jesus was misunderstood in this instance, as in others (John vi. 52 ; Luke xxii. 38), by the prosaic minds of his hearers, seems evident from his warning them that his coming would not be local, but universal (Matt. xxiv. 3, 26, 27 ; Luke xvii. 20, 21) ; that it would not be with observation ; and comparing its growth to the working of leaven hidden in the meal.

There is no doubt that in these discourses concerning his coming, Jesus is represented as predicting the wars which ended with the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple. Some critics take for granted that such predictions could not have been made by him, and must have been written after the events so described had taken place. This is assuming the impossibility of such foresight, unless by a wholly supernatural power, which power is declared incredible and impossible. But why should it be considered incredible that one endowed with the marvellous penetration of Jesus, should have been able to look into the future ? Insight is foresight. He who sees the present can foresee the future. Theodore Parker saw the civil war in the United States



long before it came, and declared that slavery would end in a bloody struggle between the free and the slave-holding States. Dr. Channing, long before the war broke out, predicted exactly what would happen if the slaveholders attempted to dissolve the Union. Just before the secession, short-sighted politicians announced that in a war between the North and the South, the North would be divided, and the fight would be carried on in the streets of northern cities. But Dr. Channing, twenty years earlier, said that if the South seceded, "there would be no need of anti-slavery societies to convert the North. The blow that would sever the Union for this cause [slavery] would produce an instantaneous explosion to shake the whole land. The moral sentiment against slavery, now kept down by the interests and duties which grow out of union, would burst its fetters, and be reinforced by the whole strength of the patriotic principle, as well as by all the prejudices and local passions which would follow disunion." Dr. Channing thus foretold, in 1840, that uprising of the people of the North which took most persons by surprise in 1861. The thinker, in his closet, could thus predict political events which were hidden from the wise politicians and prudent men of the world.

Jesus needed no miraculous gift of prophecy to foretell the approaching siege and destruction of Jerusalem and of its Temple. He only needed that power of reading the signs of the times which he blamed the Jews for not using. They asked him for a mirac-

ulous sign, and he told them that there were natural signs which they ought to be able to read (Matt. xvi. 1-4). He saw the bitter, malignant spirit of the Jewish zealots, their deadly hatred against Rome, their firm belief that the Messiah was to be a King, armed with superhuman force, and that Rome would perish before his triumphant march. The desperate fanaticism shown by the Jews under the Maccabees, the fury of their previous outbreaks against Rome, their loathing of the power of the Cæsars, were evident signs that unless their Messianic hopes could be turned into a new channel, the whole nation would at last rise against Rome; and this must end in utter ruin. Rome might be conquered by truth, but in any struggle of brute force, her thirty legions and her splendid military discipline must prevail. Jerusalem would be encircled with armies, and the Temple would be destroyed (Luke xx. 41; xxi. 5, 20, 24; xxiii. 28).

The capture of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple brought to an end the age of Moses, the age of Law, and introduced the new age, — the Kingdom of Heaven, the reign of Love. Down to this time the religion of Moses was the leading faith of the world, the high-water mark of monotheism, the chief fact in the religious history of the human race. But with the ruin of the Temple, with the end of sacrifices, the Law was replaced by the Gospel. The national religions had come to an end; the religion of humanity took their place.

This beginning of the universal religion, -- not bound to temples or altars, not a religion of "Lo here !" or "Lo there !" -- was the coming of Jesus as the Christ -- a coming not to the senses but to the soul. He did not come in the tempest or the fire, but in the still small voice of inward conviction and happy faith. He came as the thief in the night, -- when men did not expect him, and were unprepared. His coming was preceded by wars and many miseries ; it was also preceded by the preaching of the gospel to Asia and Europe. It was a judgment on mankind, -- parting the sheep from the goats, showing who were lovers of truth and right.

Thus, when the apostles preached the near coming of Jesus as the Christ, they were essentially right, though mistaken as to the outward form and accidents of that appearance. When they called on men to take him for their King, and to believe in him as able to save their souls, to bring them to God, to give them peace, they were offering to their time the best possible gift. It came as a new hope in an hour of despair. It was, in truth, the beginning of a new age.

So far as we can see from the Pauline writings, this was the true explanation of the ready acceptance of Christianity, and its steady progress. It gave the human mind, tossed by doubts, a solid foundation on which to rest, an anchor by which to cling. God, heretofore a power, a law, a name, a far-off possibility, became a friend and a father. The Christ, his dear Son, was near by, behind the veil, an inspiration and

a comfort, a leader and helper. The world had at last a Faith!

We are now prepared to read Paul's first writings, the two missionary epistles addressed to the Thessalonians, more intelligently. At Thessalonica the Jews had excited the rabble against Paul, after he had been at least three weeks in the city, and caused him to be expelled from it. From there he went to Corinth, having passed through Berea and Athens. These letters to the Thessalonians were written from Corinth; they were quoted by Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian; and both belong to the writings universally accepted by the early church.<sup>1</sup> They have in them the glow of youth, an ardent love for these new converts and friends, an immense desire to strengthen and encourage them, sadness at being obliged to leave them too soon, astonishment (which he certainly did not afterward feel) at the persistent Jewish bigotry which preferred that the whole Gentile world should die in its sins rather than it should be converted from idolatry to the living God and to a righteous life in any other way than its own. "They killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and drove us out, and please not God, and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved; to fill up their sins alway; but the wrath has come upon them to the uttermost;"

<sup>1</sup> See De Wette's "Introduction," Frothingham's translation. De Wette considers the objections raised in recent times to their genuineness to be of little weight.

that is, they are full of the spirit of wrath to the utmost extent.

No one can understand this desperate bigotry of the zealots among the Jews, who has not read the accounts of the siege of Jerusalem, where each sect was occupied in murdering the other, instead of uniting against the common enemy. Stier says<sup>1</sup> that, "in the period between the resurrection and the fall of Jerusalem, the Jewish nation acted as if possessed by seven thousand demons. The whole age had upon it the stamp of the infernal." Before the siege began, the zealots committed such atrocities in Jerusalem that many sought the Roman camp for safety. They introduced the Idumæans into the city, who massacred and tortured the best citizens. On one awful night thousands were slaughtered in the Court of the Gentiles. During the year which preceded the arrival of Titus, the Jewish factions raged against each other with fire and sword, till Jerusalem was filled with death, famine, pestilence and despair. The wrath had come upon them to the uttermost.

It was this same spirit of bitter zeal and animosity which pursued Paul wherever he went, trying to put a stop to his work, rousing the Roman authorities against him,—men binding themselves by an oath not to eat or drink till they had killed him. "Of the Jews, *five times* I received thirty-nine stripes." They "urged on the devout women of honorable estate"

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Farrar, "Early days of Christianity."



against him ; for blind devotion, and holy simplicity, and sweet womanly ardor, can be turned by fanaticism into a cruelty like that of the North American Indians. " O holy simplicity ! " said the martyr Huss, when he saw an old woman laboriously bringing a large stick of wood to add to the burning pile. The Jews stirred up the souls of the Gentiles against Paul at Iconium ; they stoned him at Lystra till he lay as dead ; they assaulted the house of Jason, where Paul stayed at Thessalonica ; they pursued him to Berea ; at Corinth they brought him before the judgment-seat of the Proconsul Gallio, the wise and liberal brother-in-law of Seneca ; who however sent them about their business, telling them it was no concern of his. They surrounded Paul with plots, tormented him with false accusations, perverted his disciples, maltreated his converts, and hated him with the full bitterness of theological and sectarian rancor, — the merciless wrath of men who mistake the wounds of their own egotism and vanity for injuries done to the Almighty.

I have dwelt on this spirit of wilful and lawless rage, this bitter zeal and animosity, as it explains a passage in these letters to the Thessalonians usually regarded as difficult. In the first letter Paul had emphasized strongly the speedy revelation of Jesus as the Christ, in an outward and visible manner, — too strongly, as it seems ; for in the second letter he corrects himself, and seeks to moderate their expectations in this regard. He still holds to an out-



ward awful coming of Jesus as Judge (2 Thess. i. 7), but warns them not to be troubled in mind by any assurance, *even though it was found in his own letter*, that the Day of the Lord is close at hand. It cannot come, he says, until a certain evil principle, "the man of sin" or "the man of lawlessness," is revealed. There is an evil principle at work privately and secretly, which must come out openly. It is now restrained by another, counteracting power. It must be revealed and seen, in order to be destroyed. This evil principle must pass through three steps. It is first restrained, then revealed, lastly destroyed.

Many explanations have been given of this "man of sin," this "Antichrist." The simplest of all has been usually passed by. The opposition to Paul at this time was that of the party of zealots among the Jews. The Jewish-Christian opposition had not begun. But the Jews, so he tells us in his first letter (ii. 17), "killed the Lord Jesus, and the prophets, and drove out us, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles," &c. He saw in them the spirit of wilfulness, of lawlessness, of fierce egotism, which had taken possession of the Jewish Temple service, taking on itself the authority, and claiming the power, of Jehovah himself. This spirit of dark, bloodthirsty pride was now held down and restrained by the Roman Power; but as soon as that power was relaxed, this demoniac spirit would break out; and when it broke out it would be destroyed by the "breath of the

mouth " of the Lord Jesus.<sup>1</sup> The Roman power had restrained the Jewish persecutors in several of the Greek cities. It was not prudent in a written letter to speak more plainly than this; but Paul reminded his readers that he had explained it to them in conversation. He had no doubt told them that Jerusalem would be overthrown, the Jewish Temple destroyed, and the worship of the Christ take its place. From his using the very images of the discourse of Jesus (compare 1 Thess. iv. 16 with Matt. xxiv. 30, 31), it is evident that he was acquainted with this discourse in which Jesus declared that the Son of Man would not come until *after* the destruction of the Temple and of Jerusalem by Roman armies (Luke xxi. 6, 20, 24, 27). Before that overthrow, the man of sin — that is, the spirit of Jewish lawlessness — must be revealed to such an extent as to bring down upon the nation the vengeance of Cæsar. Paul, therefore, in this passage is only repeating, in a covert form, the prediction of Jesus of the coming end of Judaism.

The most striking features of these letters is the warmth of affection contained in them; of which we shall speak more fully in the chapter on "The Heart of Paul." He tasks language to express his love to these dear disciples. Many incidental references connect these letters with the Book of Acts. He speaks of

<sup>1</sup> That is, by the power of his word. A reminiscence of Isaiah, — "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." Isaiah xi. 4.

his ill-treatment at Philippi (1 Thess. ii. 2 ; compare Acts xvi. 23). He names as his companions, Silas and Timothy (1 Thess. i. 1 ; 2 Thess. i. 1), who we find are associated with him in the history (see Acts xvi. 19 ; xvii. 10, 14, 15). Silas is named *before* Timothy in each case, as the more important person ; which is the more remarkable as he is scarcely heard of again. It may also be a slight evidence of the early date of these letters, written before Paul had reached the full sense of his independent position, that all the three names are associated, as in the superscription, as authors of the letter ; while afterward Paul either gives his own name alone (as in Romans, Galatians, Ephesians), or adds his own title of Apostle of Christ before giving the names of his associates (1st and 2nd Corinthians).

It has been objected to the genuineness of these letters to the Thessalonians, that too short a time had passed since the foundation of this church to cause Paul to be so anxious to see them, or to allow their faith to have been heard of so widely, or to have made it probable that they should have been organized with officers and rulers (1 Thess. i. 7, 8 ; ii. 17, 18 ; v. 12). But we must remember that Paul was compelled to quit Thessalonica in the midst of his labors, leaving them probably incomplete (Acts xvii. 10) ; that in a small country like Greece it did not take long to hear in one city what had happened in another ; and that the form of government used in the synagogue was immediately adopted by each newly formed Christian church.

The spirit of Paul is apparent in these letters, — his ardor, his desire of sympathy, the strength of his convictions, and his intense interest in his work. But there is absent from them what appears later, — the discussion of the relation of the law to the gospel, the theory of justification, and the more elaborate views of the work of Christ. The breath of youth and hope and courage is in each word. The time for mental struggles has not come.

## CHAPTER V.

### PAUL THE CHAMPION OF SPIRITUAL FREEDOM.

THE chief difficulty in Paul's writings is to know what he is trying to do ; or, as we should say in our expressive though homely phraseology, *what he is driving at*. He argues with immense earnestness and intensity, with an incomparable fire and eloquence ; but what for ? What is he trying to prove ? Whom is he seeking to convince ? Who are his opponents, and why did they oppose him ? These are the questions which we need to have answered.

The Second Epistle of Peter may, or may not, have been written by that apostle ; but even if not written by him, it was ascribed to him at such an early period that it is evident that it proceeded from his school, and contained ideas which were supposed to belong to that school. Now, the direction of Christian thought which took Peter for its guide at first, was that which considered Christianity as a part of Judaism, and an addition to Judaism ; which claimed that no one could be a Christian who did not

become a Jewish proselyte at the same time; which maintained that all the Jewish law, moral and ceremonial, was to be continued in Christianity. It is no wonder that this school of thought found the Epistles of Paul hard to be understood, for his thoughts were not their thoughts, nor his ideas their ideas. They considered Paul a dangerous man, and his writings unsafe to be read by the ignorant and unstable, who would pervert them to their own destruction. Their difficulty was, not that the Apostle's thought was unintelligible, but that they could not reconcile it with their own system.

That difficulty has continued ever since. Most of the attempts to interpret the writings of Paul have been made in the interest of some theological school or party.

Calvinism, for example, has taken possession of the Pauline epistles, and attempted to interpret all of them so as to support the doctrines of Total Depravity, Election, and Vicarious Atonement. It assumes it to have been the object of Paul to teach those doctrines.

But the difficulty of this view is that Paul does *not* teach these doctrines; he only alludes to such subjects, as to something his readers already knew and were quite familiar with. These favorite proof-texts of Calvinism occur only here and there in Paul's writings, and are incidental to his main topics. Whatever they may prove or disprove they are not the chief object of the Epistles.



John Locke, one of the most penetrating minds which has ever appeared, was the first, I believe, to arrive at the true method of finding "The secret of Paul." He said: "Drop all preconceived opinions. Go to the Epistles as if you were reading them for the first time. Read them carefully through, looking for the principal and leading idea. Read them again, and again, in the same way—not seeking to put *your* meaning *into* the Epistles, but to get Paul's meaning out of them." Following this course, Locke has left a commentary on Paul far in advance of any other of his day, and which, even now, can be read with great advantage. His main thought is that Paul was resisting the endeavor of the Jewish Christians to compel the Gentile Christians to conform to the ceremonies of the Jewish law, and that this is the key to the meaning of the Epistles.

In this view Locke was right, and he led the way to a correct understanding of Paul. But he, and those who have followed his method, have been disposed to consider this controversy as a temporary one, with which we have nothing to do. No one is trying now to compel us to perform the ceremonies of the Jewish law. Therefore the argument of Paul does not concern us or our affairs.

But I believe, on the contrary, that Paul, of all the apostles, best understood the Gospel as it lay in the mind of Jesus, in all its length, breadth, depth and height. He fully understood the principles which are to make of it a universal gospel, which

are to break down and utterly destroy dogmatism and sectarianism in the Christian Church, and cause it to be accepted as the religion of mankind. Paul entered deeply into the mind of Christ, and, by developing the ideas of Jesus, unfolded Christianity into a higher form. Peter and the other apostles were the rock on which the Church was built; but Paul was its leader, its chief, and the true Vicar of Christ. James may have been Bishop of Jerusalem, Peter Bishop of Antioch or Rome; but Paul was Universal Bishop, having "the care of all the churches." We have no evidence from the New Testament, that any one but Paul overlooked the whole field of Christianity, and took a living and active interest in the Christians at Jerusalem, the Christians in Asia Minor, the Christians in Greece, and the Christians in Italy.

When Paul contended for "justification by faith, and not by works," he was arguing the cause of Christian liberty for all time; he was fighting for our liberty here, to-day, to worship God according to our own convictions and our own conscience. When we understand what he meant by justification by faith, then we have the SECRET OF PAUL.

Let us now return to the commencement of Paul's Christian life, and see how these views of the Gospel were evolved out of his previous Judaism.

The first epoch in the life of Paul as a Christian I have already described. It was his conversion. It

was the entire change, not only of his outward status, but of his most vital inward convictions. It was renouncing the hope of gaining peace by outward religious acts, and instead of this finding spiritual life by faith in Jesus as the mediator of God's love to all his children. This profound experience was at the root of his subsequent activity, and determined the labors of his life.

It is not to be supposed that Paul arrived suddenly at the intellectual results of this principle. After his conversion, he passed at least three years in Arabia<sup>1</sup> before he went to Jerusalem or saw his fellow-Christians there. How did he spend that time? There is one way of explaining his reason for remaining so long inactive. He was thinking. Paul differed from the other apostles in this, that he could not be content with the simple facts of religion. He needed for his own satisfaction, and to enable him to preach to others, to have a systematic theory of religion; to know the relation between the Jewish system and that of Jesus; in what sense Jesus was the Christ, and how he was to be preached as the Christ. In short, he was a theologian, and needed a theology. During those three years passed in Arabia the Pauline theology was probably constructed which has had such an influence on mankind. He

<sup>1</sup> Arabia is a word of large meaning among the ancients. Perhaps it was in the neighborhood of Mount Sinai that Paul remained, in a sort of religious retreat. He says (Gal. iv. 25), "Mount Sinai is a mountain in Arabia" (revised text).

developed in his thought the majestic belief which changed a Jewish doctrine into a religion for the whole world.

Then he came to Jerusalem, and saw the apostles. In what condition did he find the Christian Church at Jerusalem? Prosperous, peaceful, not suffering from persecution. The state of things at the time of Paul's coming is thus described: "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Ghost were multiplied." And yet, at this very time, Paul, who was disputing publicly "with the Grecians" in Jerusalem, was in danger of being killed by them. These Grecians, or Hellenistic Jews, were the followers of King Herod, and claimed that he was the real Messiah of the Jews, because, being the friend of Rome, he could protect the Jews and their religion from the Romans, and give them abundance of peace. Paul excited their rage by denying that such a worldly tyrant could possibly be the true spiritual king who was to come. But after Paul had left Jerusalem, the churches for some time had no more trouble with Herod.

This brings up a very interesting question. How was it that so soon after the death of Jesus, who was crucified by the Jewish Sanhedrim for claiming to be the Messiah, his apostles and disciples were allowed, publicly and privately, to teach that he was the Christ? That which this high council put

him to death for doing, they afterward quietly permitted to be done. Some three months later, on the day of Pentecost, three thousand persons were baptized in the name of Jesus. No notice seems to have been taken of this by the Sanhedrim. They called Peter and John before them, and ordered them not to preach Jesus as the Christ. Peter replied that they must obey God, rather than man, and that they could not but speak the things they had seen and heard. They did continue to preach and to make disciples, and were not interfered with. The reason assigned is, that Gamaliel, an influential Pharisee, took their side, and intimated that their work might be divine, and would prevail, and that therefore the Council had better let them alone. This was accordingly done.

Now, the puzzle and problem is, why — when they had crucified Jesus for calling himself the Christ, when they were so angry with Stephen and put him to death, when they were so bitter against Paul that he had to leave Jerusalem and go as far as Tarsus to escape being killed — Peter, James and John were allowed to remain there and build up a church. The reason no doubt was, that they considered the church of Peter and John a Jewish sect, believing in and conforming to the Jewish ritual and ceremonies; but in the Christianity of Jesus, and afterward of Stephen and Paul, they saw a movement which was to destroy Judaism and substitute another religion in its place.

The sectarian is a man who, so long as you belong to his church, and support it, and conform to its ceremonies, is willing that you should believe what you will.<sup>1</sup> But if you desert his party, and attack it, he will oppose you to the death. Peter and James and John preached Christianity inside of Judaism; Stephen and Paul stood outside and declared that the Jewish religion was to come to an end. This therefore, of itself, explains why the Christianity of Peter was tolerated, while that of Paul was persecuted.

But there was something more than this. The two great parties among the Jews were that of the Pharisees, to which the scribes, doctors and learned men belonged, and that of the Sadducees, to which the High Priest and rulers belonged. The Pharisees and Sadducees were at war concerning the doctrine of the resurrection of the body and the immortality of the soul. Now that Jesus was gone, the Pharisees no longer feared him, and they welcomed the doctrine of his resurrection as helping them against the Sadducees. Therefore in the Sanhedrim, under the lead of Gamaliel, the Pharisees defended Peter and John, and by their powerful influence protected them.

This is confirmed by the language of the Book of Acts. After the first preaching of the apostles, we are told that "the priests and captain of the Temple, and

<sup>1</sup> The bigot and the sectarian are often confounded. But the bigot is the man who lays stress on his creed, but not on his ritual or church. The sectarian cares for his church, but is indifferent about his creed.



the Sadducees, came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached, through Jesus, the resurrection of the dead." Their offence was preaching the resurrection of the dead; but this was no offence in the sight of the Pharisees. Paul, some years later, took advantage of this discord somewhat too adroitly, when brought before this same Jewish council. "When Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, 'Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.'" The result was that these two factions began to contend with each other, and the Pharisees declared, "We find no evil in this man; but if a spirit or angel hath spoken to him [meaning what he had said of his vision of the risen Jesus], let us not fight against God." When I say that this was a little too adroit in Paul, I merely repeat his own confession afterward, in his examination at Cæsarea. He then declared that they could not blame him for anything he had said in the council, unless it was his statement that he was being called in question for teaching the fact of "the resurrection." The real charge against him was that he had spoken against the Temple, the sacrifices and the Jewish law. He taught that these were not essential to religion, and were all to pass away.

In regard to the question of the Jewish ritual, there were at least three parties in the Christian Church. In the first place, all admitted — Paul included —

that those Christians who were Jews, born and educated in Judaism, might very properly continue to practise the Jewish ceremonies. No doubt the great majority of the first Christians did so; and that was why, as I have before said, they were tolerated by the Sanhedrim.

But as soon as the Gentiles—that is, the nations outside of Judea—were converted to Christianity, the question arose at once how far they were bound by the Jewish law and the Jewish ritual. There were three answers to this question. There was a party of Jewish Christians who called themselves followers of Peter and James, who maintained that *all* Christians, both Jews and Gentiles, must keep the Jewish law. In Acts xv. 1, we find the first appearance of this party: “Certain men which came down from Judea [to Antioch] said, ‘Except ye be circumcised, after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.’”

Thereupon, after much debate, it was agreed to refer the question to the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. Then was held the first council in the Christian Church. Both sides were represented,—the narrow side by the Jewish Pharisees who were believers in Jesus, the broad side by Paul and Barnabas. The arguments have not been preserved, but we can easily conceive what they were.

The whole of Christianity, according to Paul, grew out of faith in Christ. And by faith he meant a simple trust in him as a sufficient leader, saviour,

mediator, and way to God. It was not to believe any doctrine *about* him, but to believe in Jesus himself, as a personal, ever-present friend. Paul declared it as a gospel of good news, wherever he went, that Jesus had been sent by God to save men from their sins and the consequences of their sins, to purify to himself a peculiar people, and make them happy, full of peace, full of love, full of hope. So those who believed Paul's testimony were united together in mutual fellowship as a Christian church.

But there was another party in the Christian community, who did not agree with Paul; and they said, "No! Paul is wrong. It is not enough to believe in Christ. That is all very well, but you must also become members of the Jewish church. That was founded by God himself when he selected Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as its Patriarchs; when he gave the law to Moses, and continued to speak by inspired prophets. You want organization as well as spirit. The Jewish Church has a constitution and organization, ceremonies and ritual, which even Paul acknowledges as divine, and which God has never repealed. In leaving it you are cutting yourselves off from a magnificent past, a long succession of inspired teachers, men who worked miracles by the power of Jehovah, and preserved the faith of one God in the midst of idolatry and polytheism. Jesus has nowhere said that he would abolish this grand religion of Moses; on the contrary, he said, 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the

prophets ; there shall not a jot or tittle pass from the law till all be fulfilled.' Why does Paul dare to do that which Jesus did not do ? What authority has he ? He is not one of the twelve apostles. He was not appointed, as they were, during the life of Jesus. He never saw or knew Jesus, during his life, as they did. What is his opinion worth against theirs ? Peter, whom Jesus said was the rock on which he built his church, does not teach that it is unnecessary to accept the Jewish law. On the contrary, it is well known that, at Antioch, as soon as his attention was called to it, he refused to eat with the Gentile Christians. Paul says *he* rebuked him for doing so ; but what right had Paul to rebuke one to whom Jesus had said, 'Thou art the rock,' and 'Feed my sheep' ? Besides, why *not* be circumcised, and keep the law ? If it does not do good it can do no harm. Paul's church is a new thing, never heard of till yesterday ; ours is venerable with the authority of fifteen centuries, sanctified by direct divine appointment, confirmed by miracles, and admitted by Paul himself to have come by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit."

That was the argument which Paul had to meet. I will venture to say that the strongest argument which can be urged to prove any one Christian church, or any system of Christian doctrine, essential to Christianity, is not half as strong as this argument to prove Judaism essential.

Does the Roman Catholic say, "Ours is the oldest Church" ? The Jew replies, "Ours is older by fifteen

hundred years." Does the Catholic say, "There must be an outward, visible church"? The Jew answers, "Yes, and ours is the one divinely appointed by God, as you yourselves admit." Does the Catholic say, "Peter, to whom Jesus gave the keys, is the head of our Church"? The Jew says, "Peter was a Jew; all the other apostles were Jews. Paul was a Jew — a Hebrew of the Hebrews. Jesus himself, your Master and Saviour, was a Jew according to the flesh, and he himself said that salvation is from the Jews. Your own Bible, the New Testament, as well as the Old, was all written by Jews. Your religion is a Jewish religion in its origin and source. Look to the rock whence you were hewn; look to the vine out of which all your branches have grown, and remember who said that the branch which abides not in the vine is withered."

Therefore, I say, when Paul denied and opposed this Jewish claim that all followers of Jesus must belong to the Jewish church, he was refuting beforehand every similar claim that could be made afterward by any church, sect or party. The greater includes the less, and when the strongest of all arguments is defeated, all weaker ones share its fate. If Paul utterly confuted and silenced those who said, "No salvation out of the Jewish Church," he at the same time confuted those who say, "No salvation out of the Church of Rome," or, "No salvation outside of our sect, our creed, our baptism, our experience and mode of conversion."



If this be so, Paul's secret becomes very interesting to all of us. This battle, fought long ago, in another language, in terms and phrases now grown antiquated, is of intense interest still.

When the Greeks fought at Marathon, they were defending the whole future of European civilization. The defeat of the Persians was the salvation of all those customs, laws, literatures, arts, which have been since unfolded in Europe. Therefore we go to Marathon, and muse on the old mounds of earth which cover the remains of those who there died for freedom of spirit.

The Epistle to the Galatians and the Epistle to the Romans are other battle-fields of thought, where grand victories were won for humanity,—victories whose influence shall never cease while the race endures. As we look at them we seem to be studying the half-defaced letters of an inscription in an unknown tongue and forgotten alphabet. But every such record is being deciphered. Long and patient toil has enabled us to read the historical events recorded on the Temples of Egypt, the rocks of Persepolis, the ruins of Nineveh. Certainly, as much study may be given to the meaning and secret hidden in the Epistles of the Apostle Paul.

What, then, was his answer to this argument of the Jewish Christians? How was he able to resist and to conquer such an appeal?

He did it by going down deeper and going up higher than his opponents. He overcame their



demands for ceremonial obedience by demanding a loftier and larger obedience. He asked for more religion, not less. He claimed liberty, that men might become more than ever the sons of God. He did not ask less for Christ, but more. This is the nature of all true and lasting reform. It breaks yokes, and takes off chains, that men may go up higher.

So Paul was not satisfied with any simple reply to those who troubled the minds of his converts by telling them that they must join the Jewish church; that out of that there was no salvation. He did not answer, as he might have done, that "Christ never said, 'Go into the Jewish Church.' Christ never said, 'Be sure and get into the right church.' Christ never said, "He who is not baptized, or circumcised, who does not worship in the Temple, or hear mass at the altar, will be lost.'" He did not even refer to such words of Christ as these, "The pure in heart shall see God"; "Neither in this mountain, nor yet in Jerusalem shall men worship the Father." He who worships THE FATHER, *anywhere*, in Spirit and Truth, worships the Father aright. Paul might well have quoted such sayings of Jesus to support his own views. But he saw the principle beneath all these statements, and developed it, and so struck the ground of a Universal Idea.

He said substantially this: "No works of any kind will make God love us. Not our being baptized, nor being circumcised, nor joining the Jewish church or

the Christian church, nor praying, nor giving all our goods to the poor, nor being martyrs for our religion — nothing — no works of piety, no works of charity, no works of justice, no sacraments that we partake, no profession of religion — nothing will bring to us the love of God. We can no more make God love us so, than we can make the sun shine. Open your eyes and look at the sun; that is all you can do. Open your heart, and see God's love; that is all. He loved you before you were born, loved you before the foundation of the world, loves you when you are near him, loves you when you are a great way off. Believe it, oh, believe it! You do not do anything at all to make God love you. God loves you, and when you only see that, and feel that, then it will help you to *do* everything.

“What did our Father Abraham do to make God love him, and bring him into the promised land, and give it to him and his posterity, and make him the Father of a people filled with the knowledge of Jehovah? How did he win, with what labors, with what sacrifices, the name of the Friend of God? With none. He believed in God; that was all. He trusted to that divine and perfect love, and went everywhere surrounded by its heavenly peace.

“What did Jacob do to cause God to make *him* the head of the twelve tribes of Israel? Nothing. He was no better than Esau — no, not so good. Esau was nobler, more generous, more manly, more honest, than Jacob. But God, who has no favorites, but who

sends his love in a thousand different ways, sent his love in one way to Esau, in another way to Jacob. Some men he loves by sending them success; he loves others by sending them failure, bereavement, sorrow heaped upon sorrow, trial deepening into blacker trial. He loved Ruth one way, and made her the far-off mother of Christ. He loved Job another way, and made him a great hero through disappointment and bereavement. He took Job when he sat like a king, and cast him down into the dust, into loneliness, misery and anguish. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness. Job believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness. He did not crouch, nor cower, nor lie to God, but said, 'Show me my sin, and I will confess it.'

"What did JESUS do in order to make God love him? Nothing. God chose him to be His son, to be full of a divine life, chose him before all time to be the central figure in history, and the inspiration of the human heart; and when the fulness of the time was come, sent him into the world. Christ believed this; trusted in God who sent this Heaven of Light and Love into his soul; opened his heart to it; took the hand of God, and was led by him.

"Join a church to make God love you? Be baptized or circumcised to enable God to save you? Obtain His forgiveness by going through a form, by confessing to a priest, or by saying a great many prayers? No—a thousand times no! God is in your mind

and heart *now*. His love is waiting to enter your soul to-day. Only believe it, accept it, and be saved by it."

Such was the substance of Paul's argument. Is it not still true — true now, and true always?

Before all other things the human heart needs love. To be loved, and to know that we are loved, is the beginning of all goodness. Therefore, God surrounds every cradle with an infinite motherly tenderness. What do infants do to be loved? God loves them as soon as they are born, through their mother's lips, showering kisses on their wondering eyes. What works do infants do to be loved? They cry, and scream and fret; and the more they cry and fret, the more does the mother's tenderness envelop them, and the mother's heart go out to them. At last they begin to see it, and feel it, and believe in it — their smile begins to respond to that of their mother; then their *soul* begins to live. Till that time only their body lived. *Now* their soul is safe. It is not saved by being baptized once in water, but God saves it into life by the perpetual daily baptism of a mother's love.

It is to believe in Love, human and divine (for all love is, in the last analysis, God's love), — it is this which saves the soul. This is its strength, and joy, its song, and peace.

To see a universe with nothing in it but force and law kills the life of the soul out of it, down to its very roots. To disbelieve in human goodness, to

believe all men selfish, cunning, false, is to have a stone in our bosom instead of a heart. Only the sight of love — love in heaven, and love on the earth, love which hears the eagle scream in the mountain air, and cares for the mute fish in the depths of the lake, which fills all nature with life, progress and joy, — only this gives us courage to do anything, to try for anything.

God loves us, as I have said, in many ways. He loved Joseph when he let his brothers sell him for a slave, and made him in that way viceroy of Egypt. He loved the wicked brothers in another way, and blessed them through that brother they had so cruelly treated, filling them with a healing shame, and a wholesome repentance. “Howbeit,” said Joseph, “ye meant it for evil, but the Lord meant it for good.”

The trust of Nature is blind and passive; that of man must be conscious and active. The planets cannot trust God, as we do, but they go on their way, as if confident that all is right. God blesses Jupiter in one way, and Saturn in another. He gives Saturn a ring, but he gives none to Jupiter. He gives the earth a moon, but he gives none to Venus. But he cares for them both in these different ways.

If we open our eyes and ears and heart, to see and believe the infinite blessed love which pours out orever from the bosom of the perfect One, then we are safe. Then we begin immediately to work, and obey, and our life advances in the paths God has

ordained, as the planets journey, never hasting nor resting in their unfenced roads through the depths of space.

Faith, therefore, is that which saves us ; for faith is the root, works are the branches. A foreigner comes to this country. He has only known the oppression of the Old World, the oppression of Church and State. He is told to send his children to school ; he says he cannot afford it. " But the schools are free ; you need not pay anything." " Oh, no ! that is impossible," he says, " everything must be paid for ;" and keeps his children at home. He is told to go to the polls and vote. " Oh, no !" he answers, " I am a poor man ; I have nothing to do with the government ;" and stays in the house. In the evening he sits still and does nothing. " You can read ; why do you not read ?" says some one. " But I have no book." " Go to the public library and get one." " Oh, no ! they would not let me have a book ; I am a poor man." What he needs, we see, is faith, — faith in the free and generous institutions of the land. Until he believes in them, he does not act. As soon as he is convinced of them, he begins to work. He sends his children to the free schools ; he goes to the polls and votes ; he gets books from the public library. He raises his downcast head ; he begins to believe that this world is made for him too.

When Jesus came, the world believed in gods of power and of terror. It believed in gods who interfered capriciously in human affairs, but usually let



everything go its own way. The Jews had gone a little higher; they believed in a divine justice; they had faith in law. If they did right, they would be rewarded; if wrong, punished.

Then Jesus came and said, "MY FATHER." When good came, he said, "My Father gives it." When ill arrived, he said, "My Father sends it." Men wondered, and said, "Why, he is a SON of God!" "Yes," replied others, "THE Son of God," the only son, really, God has ever yet had among men. No one goes to the *Father* but by him. See him, and you see the Father. He seems to dwell in the bosom of the Father all the time. The law comes by Moses, but a gracious and heavenly love comes by Jesus Christ.

"Come and share my faith," said Jesus, "and be sons too. This is not my religion, which I teach, but God's. My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me. He that sees me, does not see me, but sees the Father. I am only a mirror to reflect God's truth and love. Do not think about the mirror — think about what you see in the mirror."

As when, in the early summer, there come some warm days, and suddenly all the sleeping life is stirred in buds and seeds, and a leafy veil begins to be hung about the trees, and a hue of tender green steals over the grass, — so, when Jesus came, living this life of perfect trust in a divine fatherly and motherly love, there came a new life into human hearts. Winter was over; summer had come. The

birds began to sing. The voices of the blue-bird and oriole were heard in the land. Peace, deep peace, descended into the hearts of believers. The multitude of those who believed ate their meat in gladness and singleness of heart. They were safe in that childlike trust — safe from doubt, from fear, from the sins born of desolation and distrust.

In the midst of the glaciers above Chamouni, with miles of ice and snow and barren rocks around, there is a little sheltered spot of green grass and flowers. Men go to find it, it is so strange to see it there. So was the early family of Christian believers, amid poverty, loneliness, neglect, persecution, hatred. Amid the icy chill of a world of force and law, they were full of sunshine and peace, dwelling in the bosom of the Father. That was why men joined them, at the risk of the axe and cross, and of wild beasts tearing them to pieces in the amphitheatre. Peace, heavenly peace, that was the rich compensation. "Peace," says Horace, "is what all men cry after, and few find." These men had found it — found it by simple faith in Jesus Christ.

But the old Jewish spirit revived in the souls of the young Jewish converts, and they began to set up an aristocracy in religion, and said: Jewish Christians are better than Gentile Christians, for all the old promises and gifts belong to us. Do as we do, and you will be safer. Then Paul said, No, there is no difference between Jew and Greek; "the same Lord is rich unto all who call on him." Believe in him.

Faith works by love, not by fear. The only works good for much are those which flow from grateful, trusting love. You leave Christ, when you go back to the rudiments and beginnings of religion, in ceremony, ritual, altars, priests, and sacrifices. If you are circumcised, Christ profits you nothing; for you abandon the ground of Faith, Hope and Love, whenever you distrust these, think them not enough, and try to supplement them by any ceremonies. "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has set you free, and be not subject again to any yoke of bondage."

This is the secret of Paul; this is the centre, the inmost fountain of his thought. Paul, more than any one else, has gone down into the mind of Jesus. The other apostles were near the heart of Jesus; he was also near the mind of Christ. His doctrine, in the earliest times, turned a Jewish religion into one adapted to all mankind. It transferred Christianity from Asia to Europe. It broke down, in the beginning, the attempt to narrow it into the dimensions of a Jewish sect. Ever since, it has been the watchword of all fighting for freedom of spirit — of Martin Luther, and of Wesley. Salvation by faith, unbought, but given by the infinite grace of God; safety, not in ceremonial works, or signing creeds, or partaking sacraments, but in going at once to God, becoming his children, having perfect confidence in him — this is the universal, everlasting secret of human salvation.

When Luther began his Reformation, he at once appealed to the authority and teaching of Paul; and his first blow at Papal authority consisted in translating into German the Epistle to the Galatians. That Epistle became the text book of the Protestant Reformation — the manual of the Reformers. Paul was therefore the real founder of the Lutheran Reformation.

It is equally true that the apostle Paul is the founder of Liberal Christianity. For what is Liberal Christianity? Liberal Christianity does not mean the liberty to believe whatever we choose; liberty to believe whatever is pleasant, and ignore what is disagreeable. We are bound to believe whatever is true, be it agreeable or otherwise. Liberal Christianity is not indifference, nor want of earnestness. It is earnestness about the substance of things, not their form.

Nor does Liberal Christianity mean this or that set of doctrines, — Unitarianism as opposed to Trinitarianism, Arminianism as opposed to Calvinism. Liberal Christianity means a principle which may be found associated with very different creeds. I know many men Orthodox in their opinions, Trinitarian in their opinions, who belong to the front rank of Liberal Christians. Such men were Robertson, Maurice, Stanley, Arnold, in England, and in this country Dr. Bushnell and others.

These men I call Liberal Christians, though belonging to Orthodox churches, and holding Orthodox creeds. And this fact helps us to discover the

fundamental principle and essential nature of Liberal Christianity. For example, we admit on the one hand that Dr. Channing, the Unitarian, was a Liberal Christian; and on the other hand that Frederic Robertson, the Trinitarian, was a Liberal Christian. What then was there in common between them which made them both Liberal Christians?

These three elementary characters they both had: Holding earnestly each to his own opinions, his own church, his own religious experience, neither of them insisted that these were essential to Christianity; both of them admitted that men holding different doctrines might be as good Christians as themselves. While always ready to oppose what they believed false and wrong in the opinions of others, they did not undertake to judge the men who held the opinions. They were not only willing that other men should be as free as themselves, but also desired it, and were ready to help to make them so.

These three, then, are the elements of Liberal Christianity: —

1. To believe that the essence of Christianity is in the spirit, not in the letter; which belief will destroy all bigotry.

2. To believe that Christianity progresses only by means of freedom, not by constraint; which principle will put an end to all intolerance.

3. To believe that the end and aim of Christianity is inward love, and not outside works; which will abolish sectarianism.

Thus, if we find a Christian who, with strong convictions of his own, is not a bigot, and with an earnest desire that others shall become Christians, wishes them to become so in their own way ; who, loving God as the universal Father, loves all mankind as God's children ; and whose Christian sympathy is not limited by sect or party — we call that man a Liberal Christian.

And now my thesis is that the Apostle Paul was the first in the Christian Church to hold these principles and carry them out in this way, and that therefore he was the founder of Liberal Christianity.

It was not merely his contending for religious freedom in one particular instance that made Paul the founder of Liberal Christianity, it was the principles he laid down and the arguments he used. These principles cover the whole ground in dispute.

For instance, he says (Rom. ii. 28) that "He is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh ; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, — in the spirit, and not in the letter." According to Paul a man might be a true Jew who did not outwardly conform to any Jewish customs. Now Judaism was largely made up of outward customs, and a precise ritual, all written down in the Pentateuch. How much more then can we say, "He is not a Christian who is one outwardly, but one inwardly ; not one who professes Christianity, not one who talks about Christianity, but one who is a Christian in heart and spirit."



Then again to maintain his position, Paul fell back on Abraham. Abraham trusted in God; that was his goodness. He was regarded as a good man, because he trusted in God and did what he believed God commanded him to do. When was it, says Paul, that he was called a good man by God? When he was a heathen, before he was circumcised. Therefore, argues Paul, other heathen, that do as Abraham did, can be justified too. He was the father and head of the Jews after he was circumcised; the father and head of the Heathen before; and they can all say, "Father Abraham."

So Paul opens the door wide, and lets in all good men among the heathen; brings them all up to God, and gives them all a place in Abraham's bosom.

In Romans iv. 9-13, Paul establishes a principle which ought to put an end forever to every narrow doctrine of apostolic succession in the Christian church. The true descent from Abraham he declares to be this,—to walk in his steps. The true apostolic succession, then, is to walk in the steps of the apostles. We are the children of Abraham when we have a faith like his, and can believe that though dead we shall live, and though without goodness we shall be made good.

The Epistle to the Galatians is that in which Paul contends most stoutly against Jewish sectarianism, and therefore against all subsequent sectarianism. He does not merely tell the Galatians that they need not be Jews,—that it is not necessary for them to be

circumcised, — but he tells them that if they are circumcised they lose Christ, and cease to be Christians. He admits that a Jew may continue a Jew, and yet be a Christian; but he says that a Greek, or Macedonian, or Roman, who tries to become a Christian by becoming a Jew, cannot be a Christian at all. Why? Because he begins the wrong way, and adopts an unchristian principle. “I, Paul, say to you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. Christ has become of none effect to you; you are fallen from grace” (Gal. v. 1–6). He says the same thing in Romans iii. 6: “The letter killeth, the spirit giveth life.” That which is innocent in itself becomes a superstition when it is made essential. There is only one essential thing, one thing needful — a heart which is sincerely seeking God. If you make anything else essential and primary, you make this secondary. If you make circumcision the essential thing, you make the heart right with God a secondary thing. Superstition kills religion.

Paul’s liberality, therefore, was not merely toleration; he not only allowed people to be free, and to be themselves, but he insisted that they *must* be free — *must* be themselves. Freedom, to him, was a vital thing; a real step onward.

Most men who contend for Christian liberty mean thereby liberty for themselves and their own party to believe or disbelieve certain doctrines; to adopt or reject certain practices. But sometimes we find a man like the apostle Paul, like John Milton, like

Jeremy Taylor, like William Ellery Channing, who believes in freedom as a principle, not for the sake of his own particular interest; and this spirit alone deserves to be called Liberal Christianity.

This nobler kind of liberality can rest only on a deep spiritual faith. A man must see spiritual truth so clearly as to be able to separate it from the form and words in which it comes. He must be able to distinguish the things seen, which are temporal, from the things not seen, which are eternal. This power Paul had in the highest degree. It is remarkable that he, the theologian *par excellence*, the leader in Christian theology, the first who brought out distinctly a system of Christian doctrine, should be the man to declare that all such systems are transient; that we can know only in part, and that when the perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. It is he who says that all intellectual convictions, all kinds of knowledge are to disappear, all creeds and all beliefs come to an end; "whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." And it is not John, the mystic, the one who preaches always love, love, love, as Demosthenes taught action, action, action,—it is not John who chants that magnificent strain of adorable music to charity or love, but Paul, the theologian. He it was, who having thought so much, and studied so much, and said words of wisdom which will never die while the world lasts, laid them all down at the feet of Love, and said, "Love never faileth."

I say, therefore, that he was the founder of Liberal Christianity, because he was not only willing that men should be free, but ready to help them to become so; because he believed in liberty as a principle, and told men to "stand fast" in it, and not "be subject to any yoke of bondage;" because he saw that the essence of religion was inward and not outward, in the spirit and not the letter; because he saw that all forms, beliefs, knowledge, were transient and would pass away, but that faith, hope, and love would endure. Bigotry, intolerance, sectarianism, have never had, after Christ himself, so deadly a foe in the world as the apostle Paul. His labors emancipated Christianity from Judaism; his writings were the lever with which Martin Luther lifted the weight of the Roman Papacy from the church; and whenever, in any age, men strike a blow for spiritual freedom, they will be encouraged and strengthened by the example and precept of the apostle Paul.

In illustration of this, take such sayings as these: "God has made us able ministers of the New Covenant, not of the letter but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life;" "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;" in Christ "there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus;" "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

But it is not merely by such texts as these, so numerous in his writings, that Paul lays the foundation of Liberal Christianity, but by the philosophy which runs through all he says, and by his action in all emergencies.

In that wonderful passage where he teaches that love is greater than faith, he declares both superior to knowledge. He lays down there the same doctrine which has since been called "The Relativity of Knowledge." We know in part and teach in part. All opinion, all belief, is partial, one-sided, imperfect; "but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." Here the apostle Paul, the great teacher of Christianity, declares the intellectual form of his own creed transient; his creed will pass away in the larger light of higher worlds. And yet the modern defenders of creeds fear lest Christianity will come to an end if their own favorite form of dogma is a little modified.

Accept the philosophy of Paul, and bigoted attachment to any form of opinion, as though it were final, is impossible. It is only the substance of truth, the divine spirit, which endures; the letter, even of the New Covenant, will pass away.

Not only in word, but in action, Paul defended the cause of freedom of spirit. From the Epistle to the Galatians we learn that, though Peter had agreed that the Gentiles did not need to conform to the Jewish usages, he yet seemed to regard them



as a lower class of Christians, not to be treated wholly as brethren in all things. When Peter was at Antioch, the metropolis of Gentile Christianity, he declined eating with Gentile Christians. Then Paul "withstood him to his face," and charged him with inconsistency. "You have agreed," says he, "that we all, Jews and Gentiles, are saved by faith in God's love through Christ. You are backsliding, then, and making us all sinners, by calling any disciple of Jesus common and unclean. If they are Christians, they are your brethren and mine, and ought so to be treated."

We here see why Peter has been taken by the Roman Church as its head. It is because he was a ritualist in heart, and never could quite get rid of the idea that a Jew was a little nearer to God than a Gentile.

Let us thank God that, if the Roman Catholic Church has the apostle Peter at its head, those who are Protestants and Liberal Christians, have the apostle Paul; a larger, deeper, and more divinely inspired soul; one who, though the first great theologian in the church, saw that all theology was temporary and provisional, and that only the spirit of religion was essential and enduring. He fought the first great battle for freedom in the Christian church; freedom from all forms, whether of ritual or dogma. Unless such a soul of fire and power had been sent to emancipate Christianity, it is doubtful whether it could ever have thrown off the swaddling bands



of Judaism. But Paul, in spite of the most bitter opposition and persecution, fought this fight for us all, and made of Christianity a religion for mankind. It has not yet reached the full 'development which Paul foresaw; but, with his ideas and principles, nothing can prevent its ultimately becoming free from all narrowness of creed, all constraint of form, and realizing what he calls the "glorious liberty of the sons of God."

The first bitter opposers of Paul, as we learn from the Book of Acts, and from the Epistles to the Thesalonians, were the Jews. The next class of opponents were the Jewish Christians. The Jews were filled with rage that Gentiles should be called on to accept Jesus as the Jewish Messiah (Acts xiii. 45; xiv. 2, 19; 1 Thess. ii. 16), and excited the people and rulers against Paul. The Jewish-Christians were willing that Gentiles should become Christians, but insisted they must enter Christianity through the door of Judaism (Acts xv. 1; Gal. v. 6; vi. 15). They followed Paul everywhere, and where he had founded churches they contended that his converts had no claim to the privileges, blessings, and hopes of Christianity, unless they would adopt Jewish customs, especially that of circumcision.

These anti-Pauline missionaries appear to have had the most success in Galatia, a cluster of provinces in the north and centre of Asia Minor. The name Galatia, or Gallo-Græcia, was derived from the great invasion of Kelts, who had swept round from Gaul

through what is now Germany and Greece into the heart of Asia Minor, and after various fortunes were finally established in what were called Galatia prima and Galatia secunda. The majority of their descendants retained their old Keltic language, down to the fourth century, as we are told by Jerome.

The fierce sectarianism of the Jewish-Christian party had determined that Christianity should never exist except as a form of Judaism. Here then the first battle must be fought for Christian liberty *within* the Christian church. The Epistle to the Galatians shows the spirit in which Paul met the danger and overcame it.

This letter is full of fire, and the ardor of conviction. Paul says: The Gospel of Grace and Love which I preached to you, and which has brought life to your souls, is the only gospel. If I myself should bring you another, do not receive it. If an angel came to you with a different one, reject it. I am not pleading for myself, or my own opinions. It is not *my* gospel, it belongs to God.

This is the power which produces goodness, this power of grace, this love of God in the heart. No man can be made good by the ceremonies and rites of the Jewish ritual. ['By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.'] You have trusted yourselves to Jesus the Christ to be made holy and pure by his influence. These men say you are still sinners,—then Christ's influence keeps up the power of sin. But that is impossible. The dying Christ

has swept away all these works, raised us above them all. If we still need the law and its works to save us, what was the use of Christ's death?

"The promise made to Abraham, 'In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed,' was made four hundred and thirty years before the law was given to Moses. That great promise was fulfilled in Christ, and carries us up to a higher plane. The law was for the sake of the promise, — not the promise for the sake of the law. We are children of the promise, and the law is nothing to us. The law met the needs of sinners until the Faith was given us, which abolishes in our hearts the sense of guilt. The law is a teacher, educating men, and fitting them for Christ. But when we are ready and able to receive Christ, we need that teacher no more. While we were Jews, we were like children at school, preparing for manhood. Now we are of age, and enter into our inheritance. We have the spirit of sons in our heart, and can say 'Our Father!'

"Brethren! ye are not slaves, to be put under a yoke, and held in chains. Ye are invited to be free, to walk by the light of God in your souls. Walk in the spirit, and be free. This is the great reality, — the essence of life. Circumcision is nothing, uncircumcision is nothing; glad obedience and a new life are everything. Was it a delusion, or a reality, that your hearts were full of the love of God, and that the Spirit came to you by faith? Was your religion nothing, or something? Are you now going away from

God in hopes of finding him? Take care lest you go downward instead of upward. Stand fast in the liberty of Christ, and do not yield again to any yoke of bondage."

There is something all-powerful in truth spoken in such a spirit of faith. Sophistry, formalism, bigotry, quail before the straightforward words of a sincere man who sees clearly and speaks plainly. The arguments, piled up with infinite care and learning, to defend a sectarian and bigoted position, vanish into smoke as they are touched by the magic wand of Reality and Truth.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ANTAGONISM OF LAW AND GRACE.

IN the last chapter we saw how Paul opposed the Law of Jewish ceremonial works when it was made a burden for his Gentile converts. But we must examine the underlying principle a little more fully. The principle which he lays down goes farther, and we must consider its larger applications. Besides ceremonial works, there are moral works; how far does this principle bear on them?

The apostle Paul, in many passages, seems to consider *all* law as either positively injurious in its influence, or, if useful for a time, having only a temporary value. According to these texts, law, in all its forms, crushes the spirit, discourages, arouses sinful tendencies, stimulates evil desires. Was this an extravagance on his part, or has it any foundation in reality?

Thus Paul says (Rom. iv. 15), "The law worketh wrath; for where there is no law, neither is there transgression." Again (Rom. vii. 10), "The com-

mandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death ;" (Romans vii. 7) "I had not known evil desire, except the law had said, 'Thou shalt not covet.'" In such passages as these Paul seems to extend his polemic even to the moral law.

This question we will consider soon. Meantime, let us see more fully why the indignation of our Apostle was aroused against those who insisted that Gentile Christians should keep the Jewish Law, and that they could not be saved outside of Judaism.

Let us suppose an analogous case. A missionary with a large mind and heart concludes to go on a mission, not to Japan or the South Seas, but to the North End of Boston. He visits the poor, forlorn sinners there, and finds that what they need is some sympathy, some encouragement. So he tells them of God's love, of his readiness to forgive them ; tells them of the grace of God in Jesus Christ. Thus, at last, they become a little encouraged, and think that perhaps it is worth while to try to be good. He takes them out of the vile places where they are, and encourages them to be sober, to be industrious, to help each other, to avoid temptation. They are trying to do so when there arrives, let us say, a zealous sectarian, who tells them that they can never become Christians unless they join his church, and are baptized and confirmed and go to confession. Our missionary, when he returns, finds his poor converts all at sea again, thinking that God does not love them, and will not help them until they join



some ritualistic church and partake of its sacraments. What does he say? He says, like Paul, "O foolish North-enders, who has bewitched you? What was it which saved you from your sin and misery? Was it not the simple love of God in Jesus Christ? Did you not have a new courage and life and a new spirit when you first caught a glimpse of the infinite tenderness of your Heavenly Father? And now are you going back to sacraments, ceremonies, and dead works? You have the *soul* of goodness in you when you believe in God, in yourselves, and in each other; do not go back to the *body* of goodness in these forms. When you have the kernel, why care for the shell? I tell you that, if you lose your simple trust in God and Christ, and begin to doubt whether you are right, and to be anxious about getting into the right church, Jesus Christ will not be able to help you; you will lose all your Christianity."

Take another case. Here are young people, a girl and boy, who have been brought up to believe that God approves of every effort they make to do right. They are sweet, affectionate children, loving their father and mother and brothers and sisters, trying to correct their faults and improve their characters, endeavoring to do their duties as well as they can. Presently there comes some narrow-minded, bigoted zealot, who says, "They have never been converted; they are not pious; they do not belong to the church; they do not keep the Sabbath in my way. They are poor, lost souls, and never can be

saved unless I convert them." So he disturbs the minds of these dear children with his theories of theology ; tells them they are impenitent, and that the wrath of God rests on them, and that God will send them to hell unless they experience a change of heart. I think that if you or I found him talking to these good young people in that way, we should say to them : " Do not believe a word of it. The Lord loves you now, just as you are, and he does not wish you to lose your faith in him. You know God, and are known of him ; do not go back to these beggarly elements, or come into bondage to such a narrow view of God and his love. The way of salvation is through faith, not fear, through love and hope and courage, and the sense of a divine presence and providence. Do not go out of this heavenly atmosphere which now bathes your minds and hearts, to try to work yourself up into some other kind of religion. Do not be bound by this man's narrow doctrines, or by his low views of your Heavenly Father. Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free, and be not subject again to any yoke of bondage."

Formalism and ritualism lay down a law — a law of ceremonies. They make narrow rules, and say, " No salvation but through *this* law." Bigotry lays down another law — a law of belief — and says, " You can be saved only by believing this creed." Paul says, " You are saved, not by a law of ceremonies, nor by a law of belief, but by faith in the eternal, infinite, inexhaustible goodness of the Almighty."

*A law, a rule, a method*, may be a very good thing when it is used as a help and means. When it is made an end, then it is a very bad thing. The methods of the Roman Catholic Church, of the Greek Church, or the Presbyterian Church, may be very useful as long as they are used as means, and not made essential. If you make them essential, then you make faith in God secondary. There is but *one thing needful* — needful now, needful always — and that is a sincere desire to do right, or what Jesus calls being pure in heart. As long as one is honestly seeking to do right, to see the truth and to love what is good, he has a right to believe that God loves him; and everything else is secondary.

A man is lost in the forest. It is night, and a storm of wind and snow is raging. Discouraged, half-frozen, tired so that he can hardly move, he is about to lie down and die, when he hears a friendly voice shouting to him. He is filled with new hope; he goes to the sound. At last he sees a kind neighbor who has come out to look for him, and who leads him home. Just as he arrives, and is about to clasp his wife and children to his heart, another person hurries up and says, "You have not come the right way; you are all wrong; you ought to have come home by another road, which is the only straight road to your house; you must go right back into the forest, and begin again." I think the other would reply, "But I *am* at home now; that is the essential thing. I may not have come the shortest or best way, but,

as I am at home, I have the one thing needful, and I do not mean to give that up. I shall not go out in the storm again in order to come back by the right road."

A church is a method of climbing up to God ; a creed is a method ; the Lord's day, preaching, worship, prayer, the sacraments, these are methods, rules, laws ; but the end and object of all is to fill the soul with the sense of God's love. This being accomplished, the work is done.

To conform to any law of ceremonies is not essential ; to conform to any law of belief is not essential. But is it not essential, it may be said, to conform to the *law of morality* ? That depends on what we mean by the moral law. If we mean by it only an outside morality, decency, conformity to social customs, not stealing, or committing any gross misbehavior, we cannot say that this is the one thing needful. A man may commit no crime against the law of the land, or what would place him under the ban of respectable society, and yet he may be hard, cold, selfish, overbearing, tyrannical to his dependents, mean, tricky, false at heart. But if by the moral law we mean the ideal standard of love to God and man, truth in the inner part, purity of heart, then we come back to our original statement, that to aim at the best, trusting in God's help, is the essential thing.

Most of my readers lead, I suppose, decent lives. We have never been in the State prison or the county jail. We do the regular work which is expected of

us every day, and behave as well as the standard of good society requires. But why is this? Because we come from a decent stock, and have grown up under good influences. We have good blood in our veins, and have had a good Christian education. Shall we then say, "We have the one thing needful, for we conform to the law of custom and do its works; we are as good as the average about us; we are not worse than others, and we do not try to be better; we expect to be saved by the moral standard which happens to exist around us, and in the righteousness of that law we are blameless"?

I do not think that Paul would admit that this class of works is much better than the other. I think he would say, "By the deeds of the law of custom shall no flesh be justified." We must have something better than that.

Go and talk with any poor wretch in the jail or the prison. Go and talk with some poor girl, betrayed by a man who pretended to love her, and who then deserted her. You will soon see that these are the victims of circumstance, of a bad education, of neglect, of loneliness, of opportunity. You and I have been shielded all our lives from the temptations which caused them to fall. We have obeyed the law of conventional morality; but are we, really, any better than they? Can we stand up before God and say, "We have always kept ourselves out of the jail, O Lord; we have given a fiftieth part of our income to the poor; we thank thee that we are not as other men



are, — not like this poor, abandoned girl, not like these criminals in Suffolk jail”? No! I think that neither you nor I would use any such Pharisaic boast. By the deeds of the law of custom, or the law of the land, shall no flesh be justified. Unless the Lord accepts us out of his own love, we cannot expect any salvation.

That which Paul urges against the Moral Law consists in the following points: —

1. It cannot justify; that is, cannot produce inward content and peace, and a sense of God’s loving help (Rom. iii. 20, &c.). But faith or reliance on the love of God *does* justify; that is, does produce this inward peace, and sense of reconciliation with God.

In this statement the Apostle is certainly correct. The Law of Right, as an ideal standard, is and must always be above our accomplishment. It is always demanding more than we perform. The more we do, the more we see that we ought to do. No conscientious man therefore can have the satisfaction with his conduct and character, that an artist, a mechanic, or a literary man, may take in his professional work. These may sometimes feel that they have done their work as well as it can be done, but this the best of men cannot feel as to his conduct. They have done enough, but he has not. When he has done all, he must say, “I am an unprofitable servant.”

2. Paul goes further, and seems to say that the Law is an additional excitement to sin. This is



especially brought out in Rom. vii. 5-12, where he declares (ver. 5) that our sinful passions are through the law; that we should not know covetousness unless the law said, "Thou shalt not covet;" that when the commandment comes, sin revives; that the commandment intended for life produces death.

The meaning of all this may perhaps be made clear by an illustration:—

Let us suppose a child walking by itself in a garden full of tempting fruit. He has not been told not to eat it, therefore he gathers and eats as he chooses. He has no sense of wrong-doing, and no remorse. The next day his father tells him he may play in the garden but must not touch the fruit. But the temptation is too strong. No one sees him, no one will know it; he plucks and eats. Now sin revives; he is conscious of wrong-doing; his innocence is gone; sin is aroused and he dies the moral death. Moreover, having transgressed, he thinks it is of no use to stop. He feels morally degraded, and this weakens his power of resistance. The law was good. It was a hygienic law, intended to keep him in physical health; it was a law of discipline, intended to teach him self-control. But the result is that it has made him in purpose and act a sinner.

3. Once more, the Law, which has thus developed tendencies into actions and produced a sinful condition, is unable to cure it. The command to do right only shows us how subject we are to the habits and desires which make us do wrong. The father

reiterates his commands, but every time the child disobeys, he is less able to obey than he was before.

But now suppose that the father, discovering the child's fault, says, "My dear boy, I am sorry that you were tempted beyond your strength. You did wrong, but I will forgive you, for I have no doubt you are sorry. I will try to see if I cannot help you to conquer this temptation. Whenever you feel yourself in danger of disobeying, run at once into the house and tell me; I will give you something else to think about and to do." The child now feels happy again, and is justified by faith in his father's forgiving love.

Or take another example from childhood; for we must all become as little children in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven:—

A little boy at school finds his lesson very hard, and gets discouraged and does not learn it. The Law (represented by the schoolmaster) rebukes him, and orders him to be sure and learn it so as to recite it in the afternoon, or he will be punished. The child goes home and looks unhappy. The mother asks the cause and learns the difficulty, and says: "Come, we will study it together." So she pleasantly and lovingly stimulates his intellect, and helps him to conquer the difficulty. The schoolmaster is the Law; which is just and impartial, rewarding or punishing every one according to his works. The mother is Grace, which brings pardon, comfort and strength.

This, I think, will show us what the Apostle means by his polemic against the law. He only omits to

point out how the moral law is just as necessary for human progress as the Gospel. The law awakens the sense of responsibility and gives us a high aim, which the Gospel enables us to reach. Without the moral law to awaken conscience, and arouse the sense of responsibility, grace would be ineffective. It is the united action of Law and Gospel which produces spiritual progress.

But if the Apostle were to come back to us now, I think he would find another large class of persons, and an increasing class, who are expecting salvation from the works of the law. Only, the law in which they trust is neither the ceremonial law nor the law of belief, nor the moral law, nor the law of conventional good behavior. The law which to them is the one essential thing is natural law.

They would say to Paul: "All that you tell us of faith and forgiveness seems empty. What we have to do is simply to find out the laws of the universe and conform to them. We must obey physical law, intellectual law, moral law, spiritual law. When we do that, we rise; when we disobey these laws, we fall. We must study the constitution of nature and the organization of man, for in obeying these laws is our whole salvation. Retribution is the natural consequence of sin; punishment is the result, not of arbitrary will, but of eternal law, and therefore cannot be escaped. Every man must save himself by leaving off doing wrong and beginning to do right. All salvation by another's goodness or suffering is

simply impossible. We are saved by our own works, and by nothing else. Law," say they, "is rooted in the very nature of things. God himself is Law, is infinite Order. All our knowledge of His universe consists in discovering more and more of law. If a man is good, he is happy; if bad, he is miserable. What he sows, he reaps. If he sows to the flesh, he reaps corruption; if he sows to the spirit, he reaps life everlasting. This you tell us yourself, in one of your letters, and nothing can be more true. All truth, generosity, purity, is rewarded immediately by peace of mind, strength of character; all bad conduct is immediately punished by a sense of degradation and loss. Neither God nor Christ can repent for us, or believe for us, or act for us; we must do it ourselves, or it will not be done."

This is the doctrine which is taught by the very able and earnest class of men who believe in what they sometimes call the Religion of Natural Law. And no doubt it is all true, and it is most important truth. It is one of the great discoveries of our age in religion. But is it the *whole* truth? Is it the *highest* truth? Do we not need some other truth to supplement the deficiencies of this doctrine of natural law?

Are we saved by obedience to natural law? Is that the perfect gospel, the best news we can have? Obey law, and ascend; disobey it, and go down.—Is this the last word of science, of psychology, of philosophy, of religion?

Come back to us, Paul of Tarsus, and tell these doctors of natural law what they still need. Come and meet this new Mr. Legality, who assumes the form of positive knowledge, of science ; who has with him the prestige of all the discoveries in the domain of nature ; come and tell him that there is something as essential, as divine, as all this.

"I also assert," Paul would say, "that all we need, in order to rise into an upper world, is to obey the natural laws, to be always true, pure, generous, and good. All we need is to love God with all our heart and our neighbor as ourselves. Love is the fulfilling of the law. He who *does* righteousness, he is righteous. Love, not in name or tongue, but in deed and truth, and you are saved from all evil, danger, sin, in this world and all worlds.

"But suppose," continues Paul, "that you *do not* obey the natural laws ; suppose you find it hard to do so ; suppose you find a law of the members warring against the law of the mind, and bringing you into captivity to a law of sin in your members. — O ye prophets of the newness ! what are ye to do now ?"

The voice which goes forth from Natural Law is addressed to those who are whole ; to those who need no physician ; to those who are set apart from temptation ; to those who inherit strength, purity, courage, in their blood and bones. I think this voice has no help in it for the discouraged, the disappointed, the forlorn. I grant all of its truth as a one-sided state-

ment. I consent to this law that it is good. But suppose I find another law in my members, bringing me into captivity to lower habits and desires; then I must ask, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Here is something I cannot do myself. Can it be done for me?

We need another doctrine besides that of natural law. It is perfectly true that as a man sows so shall he reap. It is perfectly true that the laws of God are universal and unchanging. It is true that every day is a day of judgment; that each man is punished and rewarded on the spot. It is true that we can be saved only by working out our salvation faithfully, steadily, and constantly.

But this doctrine is for those who feel themselves strong. What for those who feel weak? How is it with the sick, the poor in spirit, the discouraged, the disappointed, those who have stumbled and fallen? Is there no hope, no encouragement for them? And does not every human being, at times, come under this category?

The laws of nature never forgive. As a man sows, so shall he reap. Is there, then, *no* forgiveness anywhere in God's universe?

Law tells us what to do. But it does not give us force by which to do it. You say to me, "Be pure, be true, be generous." But suppose I have inherited some bad blood from past generations; suppose I have been educated under bad influences; suppose I find a law in my members warring against the law



of my mind, and making me a slave to some bad habit ;— what shall I do ? Tell me, O Prophets of the nineteenth century ! tell me, ye advanced thinkers ! tell me, O doctrine of natural law !— what shall I do ?

To this, natural law has no reply. All it can say is, "Do right !" And if I cry out of the depths and say, "I need life, I need power, I need love ; I am weak, poor, blind, naked, hungry, cold ; help me ! save me !" the doctrine of natural law can only repeat, "Do right ! Be good ! Do your duty ! Obey law !"

Natural law comes to good men to make them better. It teaches the survival of the fittest. It says, "Love the good and let the bad die out." Not so Christianity. That takes the opposite course. It seeks the lost, the fallen, the weak, the sinful, to save them. It teaches the rescue of the unfit. Its first word is a word of blessing to the poor in spirit. It says, "Believe ! only believe ! all things are possible to those who believe." What natural law cannot do, what no law can do, God, sending his son to save sinners, can accomplish. This gospel creates new life under the ribs of death. It reaches clear down to the lowest, and lifts them up. It brings the sinner into the presence of his Divine friend, and unites him in trust and love with his Heavenly Father. Then, a new tide of moral and spiritual life flows into his soul. Then he says, "I live by faith in the Son of God. When I am weak, then I am strong. Those who are forgiven much love much."

The doctors of natural law do not understand this. They do not see that, while law teaches us what to do, faith gives us power with which to do it. Thus I saw, the other day, this objection urged against prayer :—

“Faith in prayer as a means of obtaining mental, moral, spiritual, or social gifts, or of averting physical or other evils, is practically immoral, and immoral in proportion to the vitality of the faith. No persuasion could be more fatally disorganizing to a community than that the best things can be had for asking, — for *any* asking, even the most sincere and heartfelt. What if the crying importunities of the poor could make them rich? What if the agonizing supplication of the sick could make them well? What if the passionate clamor of the stupid could make them wise? What if the desperate moaning of the weak and tempted could make them strong and pure? The moral constitution of the world depends on the law that we shall earn all we possess, and pay for all we own.”<sup>1</sup>

But is not prayer, then, a tendency of human nature? Is not prayer and its results an essential part of the experience of mankind? Are these *facts*, so deep-rooted, so universal, to be set aside as easily as this?

What is prayer, but the longing of the soul toward the Highest, the communion of the soul with infinite

<sup>1</sup> O. B. Frothingham.

truth and infinite beauty, the opening of the heart to receive the divinest influences?

You say all must be done by work. What work do I do when I go to see a friend, and in communion with him receive new life and power for my conduct?

A discouraged child goes to its father or its mother. The parent pours thought, love, sympathy, on his darling. In that atmosphere the child's heart revives, and he gathers courage and is able to conquer his evil. Is that influence immoral? Should the father say to his son, "No, my son, you must work out your own salvation; we must earn whatever we possess, and pay for all we own. I cannot help you."

A poor, forlorn wretch, who has wasted his powers, thrown away his opportunities, and committed every folly and imprudence, comes to our friend and says, "Oh, help me, or I shall die!" Does he carry out his own doctrine, and say, "No! I cannot help you. That would be immoral. We must earn whatever we possess"? Not in the least. He quits his books, gives up his dear studies, leaves his work and gives sympathy, thought, advice, to this good-for-nothing fellow. He gives him new faith in himself; he lifts him up, by his own courage and trust, until he catches something of that divine contagion, and is able to go again to his work with new confidence. We all believe that we have a right to do this for our brother; has not God a right to do it for his child?

No man lives to himself, and no man dies to himself. By communion with friends, with those who

love us, with the good and noble, we receive new inspiration, new hope, new life. That is the prayer of man to man, and its answer. We depend on each other every day; we go to each other for help every day. Is that immoral? Why, then, is it immoral to go, exactly in the same way, to our heavenly Friend, and to receive a new access of life from him?

Faith and work are the two sides of human life; equally necessary, equally essential. Without faith it is impossible to work. We must have some courage, confidence; we must rely on the good there is in the universe, in order to do our work earnestly and well. Without work, faith is dead. *Faith* which does not go into action is mere theory, speculation, dead dogma. So, too, *law* alone, whether it be the Jewish law of ceremonies, the Catholic law of sacraments, the Protestant law of dogma, the public law of the land, the conventional law of society, the moral law of conscience, — law alone, under any of these forms, only tells us what we ought to do, shows us our duties, our sins, our faults, our obligations. *Strength* to fulfil obligation, to conquer sin, comes from faith, hope, and love. Therefore it is, that by the works of the law no flesh can be justified; that is, no one can feel that he is really good. We only can feel that we are really good when we see the love of God; for that divine influence alone makes us good. If God be for us, what can be against us?

A large part of our life is under law; a still larger part is under grace. We pay for many things. We

buy, with immense struggle, with stern self-denial, with hard toil, a little knowledge of books and of science; a little self-discipline and self-culture; a position in society, wealth, fame, or power. We pay the price for these things, scorning delights, and living laborious days, instead of "sporting with Amaryllis in the shade," or "playing with the tangles of Neæra's hair." Meantime, what countless gifts are poured upon us for which we never pay anything! The child learns more in play, from nature, in his first few years, than by all his schooling afterward. What have we ever paid for the influences of sky and ocean, summer and winter, stars and flowers, mountains and forests? What do we pay for the love which has been poured on our childhood and youth, for friendship and affection, for the noble examples which have gone before us, for the goodness which has kept alive our faith in human nature? "We earn all we possess." Is there any possession more blessed than a mother's love? "We pay for all we own." If there is one thing which I am sure of possessing, which I know will belong to me forever, it is the generous affection of the noble friends whose good-will has sweetened and strengthened my life. What did I ever do to earn it? Thank God that life is not such a mere mercantile transaction as this theory represents it to be. Thank God that the best treasures are freely given us by God and man.

I am inclined to think, quite contrary to this opinion, that the best things *are* had for asking.

Experience sometimes confirms the saying of Jesus, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." If "prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed," if it is "the flight of one alone to the only One," if it is a perpetual seeking, knocking, asking in spirit and in truth, then I think that those who ask, receive; those who seek, find; to those who knock, the door is opened. This longing opens the soul to all higher influences, and makes it a channel for spiritual influx. Emerson says, "No man ever prayed heartily without learning something;" and Carlyle tells us that "the checks and balances of profit and loss have never been the grand agents with men."

There are two attitudes of the soul, both of which are essential for all attainment and progress. In one we turn outward, toward the finite, to work; in the other, we turn inward, toward the infinite, to receive. All work which is not merely mechanical must be supplied with strength from within. The passionate longing of the artist for beauty, the waiting of the poet for his inspiration, the hunger and thirst of the soul for goodness, these place men in relation with the infinite fountain of truth and good. We must stand still, and open the soul inwardly to receive; then we can go out and work from that centre of life. Otherwise, the stream of our life, instead of flowing from a fountain, is only running from a tank, and will soon run itself dry.



When we work, we must work according to law, and we are paid our wages according to our energy and our knowledge. When we are in the attitude of reception, we receive according to faith. Faith is trust in the reality of truth, in the supremacy of good, in the presence of beauty, in the triumph of right. To work with any energy, for great ends, we must be inwardly strengthened through this faith. He who doubts is lost. The moment the seeker for truth loses his faith in its reality and its nearness, his power of seeking for it deserts him. When the poet or artist doubts his inspiration, he becomes an artisan. Work according to law, alternated with prayer according to faith, these together, in constant mutual alternation, will accomplish great things.

God is manifested in the outward universe as law ; and when we work according to law, we come into communion with him in the outward world. But He is manifested in the soul as love. And love is free, always free, not bound by law. To believe only in God as law, and not to believe in God as love, is to separate ourselves from the inward source of our life. That way lies moral and spiritual death.

The chief difficulty with those who think prayer fruitless is not that it is immoral to ask and to receive what we never worked for. They do not think there is anything immoral in giving or receiving human gifts. But their idea of God is of a power bound by law, not as free as man. Man can act freely, according to choice ; God, they think, cannot.

The doctrine of Paul is that we are "justified" by faith, but "saved" by work. Let me translate these Jewish terms into their modern equivalents. To "be justified," means to be at peace with God and our own soul. This is the first condition of mental and moral progress. We must be satisfied that we are on the right side, — that we are going the right way, that the infinite truth and the infinite beauty are working with us, — or all our efforts are palsied by doubt. An inward self-distrust holds us back. Our labor is without hope or enthusiasm. We hesitate when we ought to go forward. No amount of work will give us this self-content; we need the self-content in order to work. We must "work out our salvation," but we can only work effectually from a centre of peace within. That peace comes through faith, through trust in an infinite goodness, an infinite beauty, an infinite compassion, an infinite tenderness. This spirit of trust came to Paul and his companions from their master Jesus. The soul of Jesus was full of faith in God, and he became thus a son, dwelling always in the bosom of the Father. We catch faith from other souls by coming in contact with them. Virtue goes out from them. So the faith of Jesus passed into the hearts and lives of his disciples; and the life they lived, they lived from the faith of the Son of God, making them also sons.

All morality which is good for anything, and all religion which is good for anything, are inseparably united. Morality without religion is a tree without

roots. Religion without morality is a fruit-tree which bears no fruit. They both cumber the ground. In some ages, religion has been made the chief concern, and human life has been neglected; then religion has run to ritual, ceremony, dogma, asceticism, formal prayer, and its life has gone out of it. At the present time, the tendency is the other way; we now undervalue faith, in the interest of law. The result of this tendency is toward emptiness of mind and heart, a loss of interest in life, a loss of courage and vital power; a loss of trust, confidence, affection. Let us unite law and love, action and faith, the sense of obligation with the sense of dependence, working out our salvation, because we know that God works in us to will and to do.

## CHAPTER VII.

### PAUL'S IDEAS CONCERNING SIN, OR MORAL EVIL.

ONE of the most striking features in the character of Paul is the intense conflict in his soul between his ardent desire for righteousness, holiness, perfect goodness, on one side, and on the other his passionate nature, which he found it so hard to guide and control. There are saints who have risen above temptation. There are those born with such a love for what is good, such an abhorrence of whatever is wrong, that they do not know what it is to be overcome of evil. They have no such conflict; they are too high up. There is another class who are too low down. They simply follow their lower nature and its impulses; they have no sense of responsibility calling on them to do better or be better. Therefore there is no conflict in *their* souls. But Paul represents the third class, whose life is a perpetual battle with themselves; who find in their souls two natures, one inclining to right, the other to wrong. They are impetuous, susceptible to every influence, easily moved from without or within; with souls aflame, and

imaginations which cover all things with an illusive glow. What they wish they wish ardently; what they dislike they dislike vehemently. Their life is a series of crises and catastrophes, at one time longing for goodness as the angels in heaven long for it and love it; at other times giving up in despair all hope of improvement, and letting themselves go wherever caprice or the will of the moment directs. They make a thousand resolutions and break them all. They struggle sincerely to conquer bad habits and form good ones; they surround themselves with incentives and helps of all kinds. Their whole heaven is bright, and all the sky serene. Then comes in a moment an unexpected storm, and all the scaffolding of their virtue goes down; so they are left desperate, reckless, hopeless.

This is the class of persons to which Paul belonged, and no one has narrated this experience in more thrilling words than he. Listen to what he says in the seventh chapter of Romans. How he describes the awful struggle with evil which he himself had been through:—

“I was alive without the law once.” I was once innocent, following my childish nature freely, before I saw any great law of duty. I was a creature of impulse, and had no sense of sin or evil.

“But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.” That is, as soon as my conscience was roused to see my duty, and I felt a desire to do something good and to become good, I found how little

power I had, how often I went wrong, and had no vital force to accomplish my purpose. The law was holy, just and good. The law said, "Love God and love man," and I knew that was right; but how could I obey it? The law is spiritual, but I am tied to my body, the slave of habit, the creature of passionate desire and caprice. I know what is right, and I do what is wrong. I mean to do right, I long to be better, but somehow I always drift back into evil. "For that which I do, I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that I do." "For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do."

This is the picture of the terrible battle which many of us have to fight. For there are few born angels, and few who have gone wholly above this struggle. As for those who are in the natural state of careless impulse, they have this conflict before them, to come to them in the future. Their conscience sleeps as yet, but one day it must and will awaken.

But then follows a very remarkable statement, showing the courageous and manly truth of the Apostle's mind. He tells us that when we are thus trying to do right, and find ourselves powerless and helpless, we are not responsible for the results. It is not we who do wrong, but the sin which dwells in us. "If then I do that which I would not, I consent to the law that it is good. Now, then, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." "For to



will is present with me, but how to perform that which I will I find not. For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

That is, sin has ceased to be guilt, and has become disease. It is no longer a wrong direction of the will, but a disease in the nature. So long as we are resisting evil, fighting against it, even though we have not escaped its power, we are free from its guilt. We have gone up one step, and that is the first ascent out of despair into hope. We are slaves, but not slaves by our own consent. If we sin, we no longer sin willingly, but unwillingly. Then it is not we who sin, but some tendency to evil hidden in the organization; our body sins, but not our soul.

At this point modern Orthodoxy and modern Liberal Christianity reject, both of them, the doctrine of Paul, and both of them to their own loss. Orthodoxy agrees with him in maintaining that there is such a thing as indwelling sin, sin as a disease, and calls it natural depravity, inherited evil. But it has not had the courage to declare that just so far as evil is inherited by us we are not responsible for it. Just so far as we abhor, hate, and renounce evil, we are free from its guilt. Then it is no more our sin, but the sin of our ancestors; or of our past, not our present. Our soul has cast it off and risen above it. That is the true doctrine, the doctrine of Paul, the doctrine

also of common sense and reason. All merit, all virtue, and all guilt reside in the will, choice, purpose. If we do right, but do it unwillingly, there is no virtue in it. If we do wrong, but do it unwillingly, reluctantly, then, just so far as we resist it with all our strength, there is no guilt in it.

But though there is no guilt, there is evil, there is misery. Here Liberal Christianity has differed from Paul, but also to its loss. It not only places all guilt and virtue in the will, which is the true doctrine, but it has usually ignored the evil tendencies in the nature derived from the past. Thus a man whose ancestors have been drunkards, is often born with an appetite for drink. He is not to blame for the appetite, but he is to blame so far as he willingly yields to it. A woman in New York, who was a profligate and criminal, had among her descendants in the third and fourth generation seventy or eighty criminals. Is it not evident that these criminals inherited from this ancestor strong tendencies to evil ; and that therefore they were less guilty in doing wrong than you and I should be if we did wrong ?

But though this kind of sin, this indwelling, inherited evil, may not be guilt, it is misery. It is slavery. "Whoso commits sin is the slave of sin." "Know ye not that to whomsoever ye yield to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death or righteousness unto life." Sin, whether it be guilt or not, is death. All wrong-doing is death, death to the nobler element in man, death to his

purity, his honor, his truth, his generosity, his aspiration. Wrong-doing makes us mean, poor, miserable. It takes our manliness out of us, and degrades us. It robs us of self-respect, courage, hope. Here is Paul's description of it : —

“I consent unto the law, that it is good. But I find another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin in my members. Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?” — or, “this dead body to which I am fastened.”

This is the description which Paul gives of his own experience of the power and misery of evil ; and it is the experience of thousands. Some fortunate natures escape it, or nearly escape it. They have inherited good tendencies in their blood, and are lifted above the power of evil. Let them bless God for this, but not condemn too severely the children of misfortune in whose soul the scale turns the other way.

We have thus far seen two points in the view of sin taken by Paul. The first is the fact that there is in mankind a tendency to wrong doing, and this tendency so strong as often to conquer the efforts of those who do their best to oppose it. The second fact is that this tendency to evil, unless overcome, results in that decay and ruin of the nobler nature which Paul calls “death.”

In this view of sin Paul is supported by modern science. Science now universally admits “a law of

heredity," by which the ancestral qualities and defects are inherited by descendants. It also shows us that the result of ancestral crime is depravity of constitution, diseased blood, leading to new vice and crime. And science also holds that such sinful tendencies are diseases, not necessarily involving guilt. They do not deserve punishment, but rather an appropriate medical treatment.

Modern scientific speculation has gone much farther than this, often so far as to dispense altogether with the notion of guilt, and to regard *all* wrong-doing as the result of disease. It has been disposed to attribute so much influence to organization and circumstance as to derive the whole character from these two sources. Human will has been reduced to a minimum, and all real freedom denied to man. Remorse is identified with regret, and conscience has no function except to make us sorry for our mistakes as virtual misfortunes. If conscience says "ought" and "ought not," it means only to suggest what will be useful or injurious. Guilt in the sight of God disappears in such an analysis as this, and "repentance" and "pardon" become words with very little meaning attached to them.

Such however is not the view of our Apostle. Besides considering sin as disease, he also recognizes it as guilt. And with this conception, the other notions of repentance and pardon become important elements of moral progress. While (in Romans vii. 7-25) he fully recognizes sin as a disease which enslaves us,

in other important passages he treats it as something which involves divine anger, and which deserves punishment. The passage in which this form of moral evil is most fully treated is Romans i. 18 to ii. 16, where it is described as having its root in free choice. Men are spoken of as "holding the truth in unrighteousness;" that is, as sinning against light; as being "without excuse," because they had a knowledge of God and his will; as "refusing to have God in their knowledge;" as "changing his truth into a lie." In order to show that the Greeks and Romans needed to be justified (or forgiven) no less than the Jews, Paul finds it necessary to explain that they have an inherent knowledge of God and of his law, and that they have also the power to obey or disobey. He fully admits that many do in fact obey this law, and therefore their conscience excuses them. Thus he recognizes a form of moral evil which is not disease, but wilful disobedience; and which is therefore guilt. The consequence of this is not called "death," but being exposed to "the wrath of God" (Rom. i. 18), or the divine displeasure. The moral consequences of this deliberate disobedience, he considers as punishment (Rom. i. 24, 26, 28). The sense of divine displeasure comes when the conscience is aroused, which is called "the day of wrath." It is the revelation to the soul of the righteous judgment of God (Rom. ii. 5). Another consequence of this wilful disobedience is "alienation," or "enmity," between man and God. But since Paul distinctly teaches (for example, Rom.

v: 8) that God loves us while we are in our sins, and before we are justified, and that this love is the source of our justification, it follows that "the wrath of God" cannot mean actual anger on his part, but the feeling on our side that we deserve his displeasure. Nor can God actually be alienated from us, but rather we are alienated from him. Thus it is never said by Paul that God is reconciled to man, but always that man is reconciled to God.

With this understanding we may now sum up the views of Paul thus:—

There are two kinds of moral evil,—

(1) The wilful disobedience of a being possessing moral freedom, to a law of right and wrong which he knows, either as positive law (the Jew) or as a revelation in the conscience (the Gentile). The result of this is a sense of divine displeasure, which causes the sinner to avoid the thought of God; which avoidance results in a further abandonment to sin. The cure for this is faith in the reality of pardon (*justification*); which produces grateful love, and thus supplies a new motive for right doing.

(2) Sin may be also regarded as a depraved habit, arising from past misconduct, or from inherited evil and the power of circumstances. The consequence is death in sin, slavery, or moral inability to do right even when we wish to do so. The cure is *redemption*, which comes from that faith in the divine help through Christ which creates hope and a new courage.



(3) The first kind of moral evil is guilt, the second kind is depravity. So far as it is guilt, it is not depravity; so far as it is depravity, it is not guilt. But willing disobedience finally produces depravity, and depravity again increases the disposition to disobey.

(4) The moral law is unable to cure this evil, because it only commands right doing, but does not give power to do right in opposition to depraved desire. ("What the law could not do because it was weak through the flesh," &c., — Rom. viii. 3.) The cure for both forms of evil is found in a new revelation of divine love in Christ (Rom. viii. 3).

To understand fully the language of Paul on this subject, we must also consider his psychology, or philosophy of human nature. It is our habit to distinguish soul and body as the two elements in mankind. But the ancients considered the constituent elements of human nature to be spirit, soul and body. This view Paul followed, as appears for example in 1 Thess. v. 23: "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless." It also comes to light in 1 Cor. xv. 44-49: "It is sown a soul-body" (*σῶμα ψυχικόν*), "it is raised a spirit-body" (*σῶμα πνευματικόν*). He adds in explanation, "If there is a soul-body there is also a spirit-body."<sup>1</sup>

According to this distribution of the human faculties, the Soul (*ψυχή*) is that centre of personality, the man himself, in which resides the unity of consciousness. This is what we mean when we say "I."

<sup>1</sup> Revised version.

This *Ego* is finite and limited, but possesses in itself intelligence, affection, will. The *Ego* thinks, loves, and acts. It stands between body and spirit, — the natural master of the one, the natural servant of the other.

The Body, the next element (σῶμα), is the organized material form, located in time and space. By it the soul is fastened to one point of space, and one moment of time. By means of bodily organization, the soul comes into communion with the outward universe and with other souls. The present body is called the "soul-body" (σῶμα ψυχικόν, 1 Cor. xx. 44), because the principle of its organization is the soul. The material organized is flesh (σάρξ), which is always seeking to draw down the soul, and so to produce the carnal mind. When the soul turns downward and minds the flesh, it is carnal-minded (Rom. viii. 5, 6); when it turns upward and minds the spirit, it is spirit-minded.

The Spirit (πνεῦμα), the third element in man, is the presence of the indwelling God. It is that by which man comes into communion with the infinite and eternal, as with the body he communes with the finite and temporal. The soul, being free, though limited, is able to turn downward to the body, or turn upward to the spirit. When subject to the body it becomes carnal; when subject to the spirit it becomes spiritual; when subject to neither it remains the natural or soul-man. Through the spirit we receive the life of God; through the body we receive

the life of the race ; in the soul we possess the incommunicable life of the individual.

The ground of this "trichotomy," as it has been called, or three-fold distinction, is that spirit, soul, and body are essentially distinct. Super-sensual ideas, as Time, Space, Cause, Right, are derived from Spirit, and all that flows from it cannot be conceived of as having beginning or end. The soul is finite, dependent ; does not have its cause in itself ; has begun to be, and may therefore cease to be. So it differs from spirit. But it is also essentially different from body, as being a perfect unit. Body is divisible, but soul is not only indivisible, but we cannot imagine its division. Body has parts, an upper side and a lower, inside and outside. Such terms cannot be applied to the soul. Although this personal unit has different functions, and various manifestations, yet the whole personality enters into each of them. The Ego may sometimes think, at other times feel, and then act. It may remember, imagine, hope, fear, suffer, be glad. But the whole Ego is in each of these varied and successive activities ; it is not one part which feels, and another part which thinks.

This psychological view has an important bearing on the Pauline view of sin, as on the whole Pauline theology. Orthodox theology has usually divided men into two classes, — the converted and the unconverted, regenerate and unregenerate, penitent and impenitent. But Paul recognizes three conditions, in either of which men can be found ; conditions in which one

or another of these elements is supreme. There is the carnal man, in whom the lower nature rules; there is the spiritual man, in whom the higher nature rules; and then there is the psychical man (translated in our version "natural man"), in whom neither flesh nor spirit is supreme, who neither serves the lower nature nor obeys the higher, but who lives the temporal life of humanity, — the man of his time, in whom the habits and instincts of society around him are incarnated. We may call him "a man of the world" — not meaning, however, "a worldly man," but simply the man whose motives come from the *milieu* in which he lives. His life does not flow down from above, nor come up from below, but pours in from around. This is Paul's soul-man, or psychical man.

When writing to the Romans, Paul dwells mostly on the distinction between flesh and spirit. He was speaking to those who were living in the midst of that frightful corruption which made imperial Rome a horror; in which reckless sensuality and awful cruelty walked hand in hand. Those to whom he wrote had around them examples of a people who seemed to have been abandoned by God to a reprobate mind — "filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity; insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of new vices, without natural affections, unmerciful." It was natural that in writing to them, he should speak of sin in its lowest forms — telling

them that "minding the flesh is death;" that "the mind of the flesh is enmity to God;" that if they "live after the flesh, they shall die" (Rom. viii. 6, 7, 8, 13). But even here, he is careful to guard against the inference that he means to attribute this depravity to the *whole* of human nature. "I know that in me — *that is in my flesh* — dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. vii. 18). It is not *the soul* which is without goodness, but the flesh. And even of this he only says that no good thing *dwelleth* (οἰκεῖ) in it; its goodness, whatever it has, is but a transient impulse, not an abiding principle.

But when Paul writes to the Corinthians, he is addressing a different class, — those who were educated, cultivated, proud of their knowledge. In them not the body, but the soul ruled; but the soul as yet unspiritualized. They were Christians, but "babes in Christ" (1 Cor. iii. 1). Being *in* Christ, they were yet so imperfect in the spiritual life as to drop down sometimes into the carnal state of jealousy and strife (1 Cor. iii. 3). It is very noticeable that Paul should declare them in the same sentence to be "carnal" and yet to be "babes in Christ." This shows that the "carnal" state may be habitual or occasional, a permanent condition or a temporary relapse. The permanent condition of these disciples was not that of the "*carnal man*," but of the "*soul-man*." This we discover from the fact that Paul does not contrast flesh and spirit, but soul and spirit. It is evident that among the Corinthian disciples were those into

whose minds the surrounding wisdom of their period had fully come. They were familiar, no doubt, with the dialectic of Aristotle and the ideal insights of Plato. Therefore he urges the impossibility of finding God by this exercise of reason; tells them that "the world by wisdom knew not God," — that "God made foolish the wisdom of this world;" and that though the preaching of a teacher crucified as a slave seemed to the world foolishness, yet that God's foolishness is wiser than man's wisdom (1 Cor. i. 18–25), and that Jesus the Christ is God's "wisdom and sanctification, redemption and righteousness." Because they were too much inclined to lay stress on this worldly wisdom, he says that he had avoided in his preaching logic and dialectic, and confined himself to the simple facts of the death and resurrection of Jesus ("We preach Christ crucified"). There is however, he adds, an inspired insight which shows to the intellect truths far deeper than those reached by merely logical processes, — the very deep things of God (1 Cor. ii. 6–15). But these insights, he maintains, are only seen by those in a spiritual state, by the spirit-man, not the psychical man. "The psychical man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The word which I have translated, after the Greek, "psychical (or soul-)man," is in the common version rendered, "the natural man;" and this is the proof-text of the doctrine of those who assert that a man must be converted before he can



understand the truths of Christianity. The passage certainly does not teach this; for these Corinthians had been converted, since they were "babes in Christ." Yet they were not yet spiritual, and Paul could not address them as such (1 Cor. iii. 1). They were neither those who "mind the flesh" nor those who "mind the spirit." They were in the intermediate state of those whose life was yet the simple soul-life, fed not from beneath, nor from above, but from the world around.

The writings of Paul have been appealed to in support of the Calvinistic doctrines of Total Depravity and Original Sin. We now begin to see how far he is from teaching those doctrines.

Calvinists have always asserted that their essential doctrines, namely, of Original Sin, Vicarious Atonement, and Election, are taught explicitly by Paul. And many who reject these doctrines with horror, are nevertheless too ready to admit and believe that Paul is responsible for them.

For my own part, after many years of careful study of the Pauline epistles, I am satisfied that Paul was not a Calvinist, and that he never taught the doctrines since known as Calvinism. Of these three, we shall now consider only the first—the Calvinistic doctrine of sin.

The fundamental dogma of Calvinism is the Fall of Man. This is taught by Calvin himself in his Institutes; by the Assembly's Confession (which is the creed to-day of all the Presbyterian churches in

the United States); by the Cambridge Platform (which has been the creed of the Orthodox Congregationalists of New England); and it was embodied (as milk for babes) in the New England Primer—

“In Adam’s fall  
We sinned all.”

Calvin, in his Institutes, has passages like these: “Consider the nature of Adam’s sin, which kindled the dreadful flame of divine wrath against the whole human race.”<sup>1</sup> “It is not surprising that he ruined his posterity by his defection, which has perverted the whole order of nature in heaven and earth.”<sup>2</sup> “It is certain that Adam is the root of mankind, and all the race vitiated by his corruption.”<sup>3</sup> “By this corruption we are justly condemned in the sight of God.” “Infants bring their condemnation into the world with them, for their whole nature is a seed of sin.”<sup>4</sup> So far Calvin.

The Assembly’s Confession states it thus (chap. 6, “Confession”): “Our first parents sinned in eating the forbidden fruit;” “They thus became dead in sin, and defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body;” “They being the root of all mankind, the *guilt* of this sin was *imputed*, and the same *death in sin conveyed* to all their posterity.”

This is one of the essential points of Calvinism, and, so far from being an obsolete doctrine, is the

<sup>1</sup> Calvin, Institutes, Book ii. c. 1, § 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. ii. c. 1, § 5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. ii. c. 1, § 6.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. ii. c. 1, § 8.

professed creed to-day of probably seven or eight thousand churches in the United States.

The question, therefore, before us is, "Did Paul teach this doctrine?"

There are two places in Paul's epistles where Adam is spoken of in connection with human sin and redemption,—one in the fifth chapter of Romans, the other in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians.

The passage in Romans is this: "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed on all men because all have sinned [then a long parenthesis], even so by the righteousness of one man justification and life have come to all."

In order to understand any argument, we must know what it is about—what is its object, its occasion, its purpose.

The object of Paul, here, was not to teach anything about Adam, but to teach something about Christ. He uses a fact which they all knew in regard to Adam, to prove something or illustrate something in regard to Christ.

What the Jewish Christians in Rome objected to, probably was that human salvation should come through an individual, and not through the whole Jewish nation. The Jewish nation was appointed to be the mediator of the true religion to mankind. The world must be redeemed by the life transmitted through the whole Jewish people, and not by any life

which could come through one man. "Such a great gift," said they, "could not come by any single individual."

Paul replies, "If sin entered into the world by one man, why should not life enter by one man? And if the evil influence proceeding from this first sinner has gone on and extended itself over the whole race, why should not the good influence proceeding from one pure soul go on and extend itself over the whole race?"

Paul therefore, is not teaching anything about Adam's sin or its consequences. He takes these for granted in order to teach something about Christ. Every one knows that sin entered into the world by the first man who sinned; and every one knows that a certain decay and habit of evil followed as a natural consequence of the sin. Men began to die, morally and spiritually, as soon as they began to sin. But he does not say they began to die because Adam sinned; he says, "Death passed on all men because *all* have sinned." They began to die because they themselves sinned.

His argument is this: "Why should you deny that life may enter the world by one man, when you know that death entered the world by one man? When Adam sinned, the human race began to go down; when Jesus lived a holy life, men began to go up. The influence of one man's sin has extended itself over all men; why should not the influence of **one** man's goodness extend over all men?"

This is Paul's argument; but this is not Calvinism. Calvin says that "Adam's sin kindled the flame of divine wrath against the whole human race." But Paul says nothing of the kind. Calvin says that the whole human race was ruined and the order of nature perverted by the offence of the first man. Paul simply says that sin and spiritual death *entered* the world with the first man.

Calvin and the Assembly's Catechism teach that the guilt of Adam's sin is imputed to his posterity, and that we are condemned by God, and justly punished, on account of the corrupt nature derived from Adam. Paul does not say this, but, as we shall presently see, he says the exact opposite.

Paul's conclusion is simply and only this,—that as by one man's disobedience many were led into sin, so by one man's obedience many shall be led into righteousness.

In the other passage (in 1 Cor. xv.) Paul says: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." He does not say that "all sin in Adam," or that "all are made guilty by Adam's sin," or that "because of Adam's sin all bring into the world a corrupt nature, which exposes them to the wrath of God." These are Calvinistic statements, but not Pauline statements. He says that all die in Adam, and all are made alive in Christ. By this he means that as men, partakers of a common humanity, we are mortal; but as Christians, partakers of Christ's life, we have within us the germ of immortality.

Thus Paul meets and answers the objection of those Jews who said, "The Jewish nation, and not any single Jew, has been appointed to redeem the race. How can any one man have enough moral power in him to be the mediator of life to mankind?" He answers, "Since death, moral death, entered the world by the disobedience of a single man, and has spread itself over the race, why should not life—moral life—enter the world by another single man, and also spread over the race?"

We must not, however, make the mistake of attributing to Paul our modern doctrine of pure individualism. He was too wise not to see that moral good and evil are propagated through races and communities; that we all have a common life as well as an individual life. No man lives to himself or dies to himself. We have already seen that we inherit tendencies to good or evil, or to both, from those who have lived before us. We are inevitably influenced by those who surround us. This influence, however, is not irresistible, nor is it total. It is universal, but not total. The truth in the Calvinistic doctrine of hereditary evil is this: that moral evil is contagious, and that moral evil is propagated. It is like a malarial poison which goes into the blood. But the falsehood of Calvinism is in calling these evil influences total and irresistible. They are not total, for there is good in every man, as well as evil; they are not irresistible, for we all have reason, conscience and freedom by which to resist them.



Moreover, good influences also are contagious, good influences also are inherited. And falsest of all is the Calvinistic doctrine that God will hold us guilty, or be angry with us, because of the evil we inherit without any action of our own.

There is one passage, I know, in Paul's letter to the Ephesians, which seems, at first sight, to teach a more Calvinistic view. It is where he tells the Jews that they "were by nature children of wrath, even as others;" that is, even as the Gentiles. But, whatever that may mean, it cannot mean that they had by nature no power of doing good, for in another passage he says that "the Gentiles who have not the law do by nature the things contained in the law." He adds that they thus show that they have another law — "a law written in their hearts."

In this last passage the words "by nature" children of wrath might be rendered "by our race," — the meaning being this, that by their position in the midst of a carnal race the life of that race flowed into them, so that they were also estranged from God, and alienated from him, and under a sense of divine wrath.

Let us now look again at the man in the second condition, in which not body but soul is dominant. The transition to this state from the first is by means of law. The law of God, whether positive or intuitive, — whether coming through the lips of Moses and amid the thunders of Sinai, or as it afterward came to Elijah on the same mountain, in a still small voice of awak-

ened conscience, — or whether it be the law of society, the law of custom, produces what we may call the moral state. It is a period of effort, often conscientious effort, to do the will of God. This was the state of good men among the Jews and Gentiles before Christ. Sometimes, indeed, they went higher, and through prophetic vision or pure aspiration, attained the upper plane of spiritual life, and walked by faith in things unseen, and called God their friend.

But often the condition of the moral man under the law was that described by Paul in the seventh chapter of Romans. The law of the mind, the law of conscience, he deliberately chose to obey ; but he found another law, — that is, not an occasional temptation, but a constant tendency towards sin, — in his body. He was thus distracted, divided ; with his mind serving the law of God, with his flesh the law of sin ; resolving to do right, yet actually doing wrong ; with a good, but ineffectual purpose ; making no progress, no advancement ; an intolerable condition, like a living man chained to a dead body, with no inward harmony, no peace, no hope, — the law constantly commanding and stimulating to feeble, ineffectual efforts ; the sense of duty a burden ; obligation and responsibility a heavy chain.

This is the state of the psychical man (called in our translation the natural man). He is one who is attempting to draw his life from law, from ethical rules and moral principles. As the carnal man draws his life (which is only a seeming life) through his body

from the life of past generations, as the spiritual man draws his life through his spirit from God, so the moral man seeks to draw life through efforts of will from the law of conscience — the sense of duty. But conscience only commands, it does not impel. It gives direction, but not energy. And so it tends to bring on despair, and the law of duty ordained for life becomes death.

But this sense of burden, bondage and need is the point of transition, by which the moral man passes into the spiritual man. His sense of want is the subjective condition of redemption ; the Gospel of Christ the objective.

The spiritual man is one who has passed from the law to the Gospel, from effort to impulse, from duty to love. In him the Spirit is supreme. He lives near to God, he calls him Father, he feels that God is a friend. The sense of sin is taken away, and the sense of pardon is imparted through faith in Christ's redeeming power. As the mind of the carnal man is toward the world, so the mind of the spiritual man is toward God. He has faith in goodness, faith that God is good, faith that Christ is a helper and friend. He looks up, and not down ; forward, not backward. He lives by hope, not fear ; by trust, and not doubt.

When Jesus came he gave this new principle to the human race. He gave an impulse to mankind in the direction of faith and hope. He imparted a new life of trust, expectation, immortal anticipation, to humanity. This was the leaven mingled in the

meal till all should be leavened. All who live under Christian influences are partakers of this life. We are all lifted above that condition of hopelessness which oppressed the best men of the Roman empire in the first century. We can hardly imagine the stagnation of soul, the helpless gloom of that period. The world seemed to have come to an end. There was nothing to live for, nothing to expect. This was the case with that admirable man, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, whom Niebuhr pronounces one of the best men who ever lived, but also one of the most unhappy. He saw no hope anywhere, no prospect of any improvement. The hope of Christians seemed to him a mere fanaticism, and all life was to him dark and empty.

How different are Christian lands to-day! If there is one thing which gives character to our age, it is hope. We are looking for something new and better every day. We are expecting new inventions in art, new discoveries in science, improvements in legislation, reforms in society, temperance reforms, civil service reforms, sanitary reforms, theological reforms, church reforms.

When Christ came the tendency seemed to be downward. Now the tendency is upward. If we study history we shall find on the whole a steady upward movement in Christendom since the first century, and it was never more apparent than it is to-day.

How much of this change is due to the impulse given by this one soul, and his faith in God as an

infinite friend, is a matter not for dogmatizing, but for careful study. There is the same disposition to-day that there was at first, to doubt whether one man could do so much. People still say, as the Jewish Christians said to Paul, "God sends such influences not by any one man, but by race forces, national forces, powers inherent in humanity." Men are still slow to believe in the marvellous power wrapped up in a single soul, for good or evil. And yet we witness this power every day. A Washington is born, and a purer patriotism enters the world with him. A Channing is born, and a nobler theology arrives. A Napoleon is born, and the reign of physical force, of low ambition, of national demoralization, comes back into the world with new power. All men living feel these influences for good or evil. By no fault of their own they are drawn down together to a lower level; by no merit of their own they are raised to a higher. In Adam all die, and in Christ all are made alive. Every influence which goes to make body supreme over soul draws the world downward; every influence which makes spirit the master of the soul draws it upward.

Meantime, the soul of man stands in the midst, armed with freedom, called on to choose between these opposing influences. Influences come to us from below and from above; it is ours to choose the good and refuse the evil. We may become servants of God by obedience to what is highest; servants of evil by following what is lowest. We have in us

the seeds of death and of life. We are all dying in Adam, and all being made alive in Christ. But it is for us to say to which opposing influence we will yield.

Original sin, according to Paul, is a tendency to evil which is in all men. It is less than a necessity, for it can be resisted; it is more than a possibility, for it is constant, a "law of the members." It is a proclivity to evil in the organization, coming by the law of heredity from all past evil. It is not guilt, but evil; not a fault, but a misfortune. But God has given a stronger impulse to mankind, through the life of Christ and of all good men, in the opposite direction, — which also enters the very organization and works by the same law of heredity. We inherit good as well as evil from the past. From thousands of ancestors, the tides of life pour through us all. The soul of each man stands in the midst to yield to these influences, or resist them, or to choose between them as it will.

All our virtue and all our guilt consists in the choice we make between these opposing tendencies. It is by no guilt of ours that evil comes to us; it is by no merit of ours that Christ and Christian influences meet us. Many a poor soul may be swept away toward wrong while struggling against it, — a baffled swimmer, for whom the tide is too strong. But let him never despair, never yield. As long as he resists he is not responsible; when he yields to evil, then he becomes guilty. And let him be sure that



there is a stronger influence which can save him if he will trust to it; that where sin abounds grace will yet more abound.

Original sin, then, as taught by Paul, is a tendency to sin, not a necessity of sinning. It belongs to the body, not to the soul; still less to the spirit. But the tendency is so strong that it requires to be constantly resisted. To oppose a permanent tendency by constant efforts of the will, by a never-ending series of volitions, is a superhuman task. We need to oppose this tendency by another. This counteracting tendency was introduced by Christ. As the tendency to evil, originating with the first man, draws the soul downward through the senses, so the tendency to good, originating with Christ, draws the soul upward through the spirit.

Christ introduces a tendency to good by making God, duty, and immortality realities to the soul. Philosophy gives them to us as probabilities for the thought, Christianity introduces them into our life. Philosophy and theology theorize; religion realizes. Those rest on speculation, this on experience. By inward intuition, inward experience, — call it what you will, — Christ came in contact with truth, saw it, felt it, knew it. Christianity and science rest on the same basis — experience. Christianity is a perpetually new demonstration of the reality of God, duty, and immortality, in each generation, in each soul. Accordingly, to the religious man, God is as real as the world; laws of duty as absolute as the

laws of nature ; immortality, or eternal life, or spiritual existence, flowing from God, now and always, as real as bodily life, or temporal existence, flowing from the outward world through the senses.

To sum up what has been said. The carnal man dislikes and shuns God ; the moral man fears and obeys him ; the spiritual man loves him, and lives from him. The carnal man is his enemy ; the moral man his servant ; the spiritual man his friend. The carnal man is led by animal desires ; the moral man by conscience ; the spiritual man by love. The carnal man is moving downward toward death ; the spiritual man upward, toward life and peace ; the moral man, even when standing still, is looking in the right direction. In the carnal man there is no conflict ; he is at harmony with himself, for his higher nature sleeps, and his soul obeys his lower nature. In the spiritual man, again, there is no conflict, but a higher and truer harmony of all his powers ; for body serves the soul, and soul the spirit. But in the moral man there is a constant struggle and conflict ; for the flesh and spirit are both active, "and the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are opposite one to another, so that ye cannot do the things ye would."

The common theory of orthodox preachers, which divides all men into saints and sinners, penitent and impenitent, carnal and spiritual, is equally opposed to Paul's doctrine and the facts of the case. Men fall into three classes, not into two. Or, if you choose to

make two classes only, you must put the moral and spiritual together; because the man who is trying to do right is on the right way, going toward God, however slowly. The only danger is that he will be discouraged and give up; and so he needs the great hope of the Gospel to cheer him, needs to know that God, Christ, the angels, and all good men are on his side, and that God's spirit is ready to help him whenever he will.

The doctrine of Paul concerning inherited evil and sin differs, then, from that of Calvinism in these essential points:—

1. Calvinism asserts that inherited evil, found in our nature, is guilt. Paul explicitly denies this. Sinful conduct, so far as it results from inherited depravity, he says is not done by us, but by sin that dwelleth in us.

2. Calvinism teaches that this corruption of nature is total. Paul teaches that there is a power for good as well as evil in every man, and that even those without law may do by nature the things commanded by the law.

3. Calvinism declares that we sin in Adam. This statement is not found in Paul. We do not sin in Adam (or as men); but as men, descendants from Adam, we share in a common inheritance of degeneracy and decay.

4. Calvinism teaches the doctrine of inability. It denies freedom in man to choose and do right before conversion. This, again, is nowhere taught by Paul.

When he asserted that the Gentiles outside of all law and gospel, "do by nature the things contained in the law," and "are a law unto themselves," he asserted moral freedom in the unconverted. The same doctrine is plainly taught by Jesus in his account of the day of judgment, where the Gentiles who have done good works are surprised to find that they have been serving Christ unconsciously.

Thus we see the truth of Paul's saying, "We are saved by hope," and how it is connected with his whole system of thought. It is a hope full of immortal life. Hope gives courage, and helps us forward. The great gift of hope came to the world chiefly through Christ. He taught mankind to see an infinite Love surrounding all being, guiding all events, inspiring all hearts, and leading all things on toward an infinite and perfect good. With this hope in our souls we can face evil and conquer it. Evil is real, it is in us, it is around us, but it is not supreme. Good is higher and stronger. Sin may abound, but grace abounds still more.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH, TRANSLATED INTO SOME OF ITS MODERN EQUIV- ALENTS.

WE have already considered Paul's doctrine concerning Faith on its negative side, as the power to overcome all kinds of narrow, formal, and intolerant religion. I now propose to speak of it on its positive side, as the chief motive power in life. And in thus speaking of it, I shall endeavor to translate the ancient and sacred formula out of its Scriptural language into its various modern equivalents. It is often desirable to do this, — to quit, for a time at least, the old language, which has become rigid and formal, and try some more elastic phraseology, something more in accordance with our modern habits of thought. So only does it become really intelligible.

There is only one way in which men and women can have perfect peace, satisfaction, content ; and that is by being brought into intimate, inward, happy communion with God. To come near to God, to live near to God, to live from God, with God, to God, — that alone is enough for us.

The reason of this is that God only is infinite, permanent and real; everything else is transient, unreal, apparent. Away from God, outside of God, all things seem in perpetual flux and change. The flower decays, the leaves fall, the grass withers, man dies, and his expectations perish.

A world without God is a world without hope. What motive is there in it for exertion? All things are coming from nowhere, and journeying toward nothing. Chaotic forces, struggling together, have, after a thousand million failures, accidentally succeeded in creating these worlds. The order of the universe is an accident. The succession of day and night, summer and winter, are accidents. All the beautiful and majestic order of the advancing year, with its hosts of grasses, flowers, budding and blossoming trees, is a chance; there is no wisdom, no love in it. It was all worked out by accidental laws, with no intelligence behind them. It was evolved accidentally; it will end so. Everything goes round in a circle. The thing which has been is that which shall be. This is the atheist's theory of the universe.

A picture of this desolate, desperate state of mind is painted for us in the sombre colors of the book of Ecclesiastes. "The thing which has been is that which shall be," it says. There is no progress, only change. "All things are full of labor, man cannot utter it." Blackness, like that of the catacombs, where millions of graves rest in perpetual darkness, drops its dreary veil over natural joy, quenches



courage, takes the spring out of life. With wonderful wisdom the Scripture says: "Without God, without hope in the world."

I do not mean to say that all atheists are hopeless and desperate. Among them are active, conscientious, cheerful, and good men. Once, as I have heard, Robert Collyer was talking with such a man, and the man said, "Mr. Collyer, I have no religion; I believe in Nature, not in God. But am I not as good as most Christians? Am I dishonest? Am I selfish? Don't you come to me if you want help for the poor? — and do I refuse? Why find fault, then, with my atheism?"

"Certainly," Robert replied; "you are not only as good as most Christians, but better. But you seem to me to be like a man who, having inherited an estate from his ancestors, is spending, not his income only, but also his capital. You have inherited a stock of goodness from the faith of your fathers; but what have you got to leave to your children? The faith of those who went before you has become a part of your brain and heart, and it moves you still unconsciously. But your children will not have this habit of faith, and habit of hope, and habit of justice, which has come to you. You are using up the capital, and they will begin life with no such inherited faith, but only your dreary maxims of doubt and denial. How will it be with them?"

When the engineer turns off the steam from the driving-wheels of the locomotive, it continues to run

a good while by its momentum. A person looking at it might say, "What is the use of steam? The train seems to run just as well without it." But, before long, it must stop.

If you should kill out the faith of this generation, close all the churches, put an end to prayer, and, instead of the word of God preached from our pulpits every Sunday, devote them to lectures on matter and motion, the effect would not immediately appear. This generation would run on, from its momentum, for a good while. People would still be honest, and kind, and happy. But gradually a gloom would settle down on life; gradually the springs of existence would be weakened; hope would die out of the human heart, and the question, "*What is the use of anything?*" would be answered, in the sad words of Ecclesiastes, "All things are vanity, and vexation of spirit. He who increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow. Then I set my heart to despair of all the labor I had taken under the sun."

FAITH is the spring of all hope, all action, all joy in life, — faith in things unseen; faith in an infinite wisdom and love, before all things, above all things; faith in a God of infinite intelligence, who never makes a mistake; of infinite power, whose plans can never miscarry because of sin or Satan; of infinite love, which does not mean that any should perish, but means that all shall be saved. This faith is to the world of soul what the sun is to the world of nature. When it rises, day comes. While it shines, all things

live and grow. When it disappears, we are left in cold and darkness. When eclipsed by doubt or superstition, a chill comes over us; the grass turns gray, the glory leaves the flower.

Therefore, in all ages and lands, men have sought to take hold of something higher than themselves,—something supernatural, superhuman, unchanging. In this ever-rolling sea of time, they drop their anchor, hoping to strike something solid beneath which will hold them firm. It strikes a sacrament, and holds by that a little while; and then comes a storm, and it breaks away. It catches to a saint, and holds by him; to an inspired prophet and apostle, and holds by him. But these also give way, and at length it strikes the rock,—the rocky basis of all belief,—and takes hold of the Infinite Being himself. There it holds, and holds forever.

The Roman Catholic goes to church, and as he looks at the altar, believing that the Deity is really present there in visible form, he is brought near to God. A sense of awe, of gratitude, of trust, comes over him. The altar is a way to God, and so he thinks it is the *only* way, and says, “Out of the church there is no salvation.”

Another man, tormented by his sins, is told that Christ has made an atonement, and now he can come at once to God. So he goes, and he finds peace and pardon in God, and joy in believing. Then he says, “There is no way to God but by believing in the atonement.”

But every way which brings us to God is the right way, and no way is right for us unless it brings us to God.

This faith is not a blind belief in doctrines. It is not belief in doctrines at all. To believe the Apostles' Creed, to accept the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England, to give an intellectual assent to the doctrines of Rome, of Calvin, of Channing, of Theodore Parker, is not *faith* at all. A doctrine can never be the object of faith; the object of faith is always a person. We believe a creed, but we have faith in a friend. We assent to a proposition, but we trust our father and mother. Faith always has goodness, wisdom and strength, for its object.

It is faith which saves the soul; belief never did, never can, save the soul. No speculative belief whether orthodox or rational, necessarily makes a man better. Good men have bad creeds, bad men have good creeds. Theological creeds influence conduct, but only indirectly; but faith influences us at once and always.

The object of faith, I said, is always a person, not a doctrine. I go further, and say, that the object of faith is always personal goodness. Only good men inspire faith. Badness inspires fear; if accompanied with power, it may strike awe; but in order to make us trust it, it must pretend to be good. We never have faith in the devil, unless he disguise himself as an angel of light.

Faith casts out *fear*, just as love does. When we

are afraid of God, we have no faith in him ; when we have faith in him, we are not afraid of him.

A little child is all faith and trust ; so it is afraid of no one. It goes up to a stranger in the street, and says, "See my ball — see my doll," having full confidence in the sympathy every one must feel in its affairs.

A great evil of sin is, that it casts out faith ; it makes us doubt others, and also doubt ourselves. We are afraid to trust others, because we have been deceived. We are afraid to trust our own good impulses, for fear they should not endure. We are afraid to trust God, because we think we are not fit to go to him, not fit to pray to him, not good enough to come near him. So sin kills out the faith of the human heart, and takes away its life, courage, and hope.

The religions of the world have all endeavored to meet this difficulty. They said, "Yes, you are not good enough to come near God ; but we will appoint priests, holy men, who can offer prayers for you, intercede for you, make sacrifices for you. You may kneel in the outer courts, while they go into the Holy of Holies and bring back to you the answer of God."

This was something. This was better than nothing. This gave men a sort of faith at second hand. Sacramental religion, priestly religion, is very well as a step to something higher. If you cannot believe directly in God, it is well to believe in him through

your priest. If you do not dare to pray yourself, it is well to look on while your priest is offering his prayers at the altar. This is a step—the first step—out of no religion to religion.

This sacramental religion has been almost universal outside of Christianity, both in ancient and modern times. In ancient days, Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, had their temples, sacrifices and priesthood; in our times, Brahmins and Buddhists, Pagans and Indians, have their holy men, their monks, their magicians and prophets, through whom the people approach God.

Judaism was in part a sacramental, and in part a rational religion. It had magnificent ceremonies and a pure doctrine. The priest administered the sacraments; the prophet taught religion and morality.

But there is always a tendency in sacraments to take the place of faith. Instituted to help men in to God, they put themselves in the place of God, and so hinder the ascent of the soul. This is idolatry. Everything is an idol which stops worship half way. A sacrament is an idol, if we worship it, instead of passing through it to God. A priest or preacher is an idol, if we look on him as holy and sacred, instead of considering him as a friend who can help us to the unseen sacredness beyond. The Bible becomes an idol, if we worship its letter, instead of its spirit. For “the letter,” says Paul, “killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” A creed is an idol, if we think there is any merit in believing it, and hope to be saved by



that belief. Sabbath-keeping, and church-going, and prayer, may all become idols in the same way. To substitute the symbol for that which it symbolizes — to worship the mediatorial form which brings us to God, instead of worshipping God himself — is idolatry. And this is just as bad as atheism, — perhaps worse, for it gives us a symbol to worship, instead of a living God. Atheism leaves the soul empty of faith; but superstition substitutes a dead formalism in its place, and so makes faith more difficult.

The object of all great reformers and reforms has been to break up this frozen crust of ceremony, and bring men directly into the presence of the living God.

When Jesus came, he found that the Jewish priest had silenced the Jewish prophet. No prophet had appeared in Judea for four hundred years, but the sacraments, sacrifices, and temple worship went on as before. These services had stiffened into a lifeless form; so the first time that Jesus entered the Temple, he drove out the money changers, and said: "You have made my Father's house a den of thieves." They had made an idol of the Temple; he said that every stone of it should be pulled down. They had made an idol of the Sabbath; he said, "The Sabbath is made for man." They had made an idol of the sacrificial offerings; he said, "God will have mercy, and not sacrifice." They had made an idol of solemn public prayers; he said, "When thou prayest, go into thy closet." He denounced the Scribes and Pharisees, who, for a pretence, made long prayers, and

by their cold, formal hypocrisy shut up the kingdom of heaven against men. He said that the pure in heart saw God, face to face, and that the true worshippers did not worship the Father in this place or that, but in spirit and truth. He awakened a living faith in God as a father and friend, and showed them how to become *sons of God*. The mighty tide of love in his soul overflowed all the ceremonies and forms of Judaism, and lifted his disciples into happy, intimate communion with their heavenly Father. In the midst of persecution and suffering they were full of joy. "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul; they ate their meat daily in gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people."

I mentioned, in a former chapter, that the Jewish Christians fell back on their ceremonies. They missed the grand ritual of the Temple, its daily sacrifices, its priesthood. Their new faith was too simple, too bare, too cold. So they said, "Let us have both,—the new faith, and the old ritual too. Man has a body, as well as a soul; why should not religion have a body also, as well as a soul?"

Then Paul opposed himself to this tendency, declaring: "All very well for you who have always been Jews. Keep the old ceremonies, if you like. A man is no worse for them, if he is no better. But do not say they are essential; nothing is essential but faith in God. If we can come to God, and trust in him, it is no matter how we come."

This is the principle of justification by faith. It means immediate access to God in simple trust. It is trust in the instincts of the soul, which prove themselves to be true. It is trust in the omnipotence of love, which will fill with eternal life all who come into communion with it. Faith itself is the evidence of things not seen. Do not go back of it, to ask if you have a right to have it. Do not demand a proof that you have a right to love God. Love is an unerring light, and joy in God is its own security.

The immense ardor and ability of the Apostle triumphed over all opposition, and Christianity was emancipated from Jewish ceremonies.

But ever, as the winter of unbelief comes, and the river of faith sinks back into its channel, the ice of forms accumulates along its shores. So, when the ardor of faith ceased, there grew up in the church another system of ceremonies. The form, once more, took the place of the substance; sacraments were substituted for love. Then arose Martin Luther, and again declared that we were justified by faith, not by works. "Trust in God," said he, "that is all." In a thousand ways he urged this truth, and so there came a great inspiration into men's souls. It roused all hearts to know that God was so near to them; that he was really present, not in the eucharist on the altar, but in the soul that came to him in trust and love. Once more the world was lifted into immediate communion with God, and in this lay the spiritual force of the Lutheran Reformation.

But the ideas of Luther and his friends, which flashed out of them like rays of living light, were taken up by the Protestant theologians of the next century, made into creeds, and then worshipped. As the Roman Catholics put ceremonies between the soul of man and God, so the Protestant divines put dogmas and doctrines between the soul of man and God. Now we were to be saved, not by sacraments, indeed, but by believing a creed. This idolatry took the place of the former ones. So, once more, men had to be taught that we are justified by faith; that God will forgive us when we can believe in his forgiving love; that what we need is not a creed nor a doctrine, but immediate communion with the Father.

I will mention four Protestant movements, all of which have had this for their object, and all of which have brought men back into direct communion with the Infinite Spirit. These four are: Quakerism, Methodism, Unitarianism as taught by Dr. Channing, and the Transcendentalism of Theodore Parker and Mr. Emerson.

The Quaker movement in the 17th century, and the Methodist movement in the 18th century, I will not describe particularly. But the central idea of Quakerism was faith in the Inner Light, or God's voice in the soul. The Friends believed that in every soul there is an open door to God, and that if we are quiet that voice will speak, and tell us what to think and do. Truth comes immediately from God, not from tradition or through the senses. "Each person,"

says Penn, "knows God from an infallible demonstration in himself. The instinct of a Deity is so natural to man, that he cannot be without it, and be. The Spirit of God teaches all things to the waiting, patient soul." In this faith the Quakers went forth, giving their testimony against war, against slavery, against oaths, rejecting sacraments and priests, having no baptism, nor Lord's Supper, nor paid ministers, — taking care of each other, eating their meat in singleness of heart. "They are a people," said Cromwell, "whom I cannot win by gifts, honors, offices or places."

The Quaker movement meant "going directly to God." It was "justification by faith" in a modern equivalent. So also was the great movement of Wesley. Wesley was at first what we call a ritualist, seeking to save his soul and the souls of others by sacraments, sacrifices, self-denial, and charity. But the Methodist movement began only when he dropped all this, and accepted simple faith as sufficient for his own salvation and that of the world. By faith he, also, meant direct access to God. Read the Methodist hymns in their Hymn Book — for the hymns of any community are the surest signs of their central faith. See how close they come to God, with what childlike familiarity they depend on him ! Most hymns adore a distant God ; the authors of these feel God talking with their heart.

"Talk with us, Lord, thyself reveal,  
While here o'er earth we rove ;  
Speak to our hearts, and let us feel  
The kindling of thy love."

Such hymns remind one of Rafaele's picture of St. Cecilia, who has ceased from her own song, and dropped her instrument, to listen to the angels singing above, far off, yet close to her ear and heart.

The Unitarian movement, in the mind of Dr. Channing, had the same purpose. He sought for a simpler faith than the doctrines of his day offered. His faith was that man was the child of God, and that God's love came near to every human heart. He, too, taught salvation by faith,—he taught us to trust always in the omnipotence of Love, and in the sufficiency of human capacity and human power to find its way direct to the Father. So he led men up from the formal piety and mere outside morality which prevailed in his day, to an enthusiasm for a living and loving God, for human freedom, progress, perpetual development. The strength of his teachings was that he made salvation to have its root in a perfect trust in God and man.

Lastly came the Transcendental movement, which once more put aside all religious works and ceremonies, and substituted for them a profound trust in the undying and immortal instincts of the soul, and in a God so infinitely perfect as to be incapable of any change, whom all nature and all life must obey,—a God moving in all things, an inspiration in all hearts, the all in all. Emerson is the prophet of this faith, and thus he expresses it:—

“ Ever fresh, the broad creation,  
A divine improvisation,



From the heart of God proceeds,  
A single will, a million deeds.  
He is the axis of the star ;  
He is the sparkle of the spar ;  
He is the heart of every creature ;  
He is the meaning of each feature ;  
And his mind is as the sky,  
Than all it holds more deep, more high."

This may be pantheism, but all true religion grazes close to pantheism. Pantheism says everything is God. Christianity says God is in everything.

These four doctrines are all, it will be seen, modern equivalents for Paul's doctrine of justification by faith. They all mean direct access to the peace, love, and light coming from God,—access without intervention of priest, book or creed, church or ceremony. The Quaker says, "We can receive the illumination of the Inward Light as soon as we believe in it." The Methodist says, "We can receive the influence of the grace of God into our hearts as soon as we believe in it." The Unitarian says, "Man, made in God's image, who has never lost that likeness, is still God's child, and can go direct to his Heavenly Father, without waiting for any special conversion, as soon as he believes in his Father's love." The Transcendentalist says, "Man, by nature divine, is able to have and do all divine things as soon as he believes this."

The immediate effect of all this teaching is the same. It is to make religion seem natural and near, instead of unnatural and remote. Have faith, as a grain of mustard-seed, in God, in Man, in Divine Goodness

and Grace, in human capacity and destiny, and you rise at once to strength and peace. When you pray for any good thing, believe that you shall receive it, and you have it. When you desire to do any good thing, believe that you can do it, and you can. Peace and pardon are not hidden, or afar off. They do not need to be translated out of Hebrew or Sanskrit, or to be brought down from Heaven by an angel.

As soon as this is seen, a revival of spiritual life sets in. The Quaker movement revived the spiritual life of England; so did the Methodist movement. A revival of interest in religious truth followed the teaching of Channing; another revival, that of Emerson and Parker. In all these cases the outsiders, before indifferent, were awakened. This doctrine always goes to find the one sheep gone astray — the heretic, the infidel, the sceptic. It leaves the ninety and nine religious people who need no repentance, and goes to seek and save the lost. Those satisfied with Judaism did not go to Paul. They said, "He means well, but he preaches a very odd doctrine, and one easily abused." The good Catholics did not want Luther; they thought him a very dangerous innovator, with his Solifidian theories. The good Church of England people did not like Wesley; he was turning the world upside down, — putting bakers and butchers into the pulpit, and preaching in the street instead of the church. He did not do anything "decently and in order." The high and dry Orthodox people thought Dr. Channing a very mischievous person. All the

accepted churches, Orthodox or Unitarian, including some persons who now recognize his worth, disliked Theodore Parker. But the common people heard all these teachers gladly. The door to God, before closed, seemed to open. The way to heaven, before hard to find, now became plain. "This is something we can understand," men said. "This seems like common sense — how simple it is!" The kingdom of God was preached, and all men hastened into it.

Thus we see the truth of the Apostle's saying — "Differences of administration, but the same Lord; diversities of operation, but the same God that worketh all in all." Just as pure carbon appears in allotropic forms, — sometimes as charcoal, at other times as plumbago, and again as a sparkling diamond, — so one and the same doctrine will reappear in history in many Protean shapes. It has equivalents often unsuspected. The metaphysician talks of the categorical imperative, the Quaker of the inward light, and the mystic of a God-consciousness; but all mean the same as Paul meant when he said, "We are justified by faith." They all mean that we are to take truth at first hand, and go direct to God.

These are the different forms taken by this doctrine in different minds and different ages. In every mind and in every age, it means direct access to God. Whenever taught afresh, it awakens a new religious life, gives new hope to man, creates wonderful expectations, and strengthens the moral nature to do nobly and to bear patiently.

We need this living faith to-day. We are half dead without it. We need confidence in God as one with whom we can talk face to face, — more tender to us than the tenderest mother, yet strong to guide, discipline, warn, and restrain us, — the one unerring teacher and unfailing friend. We need to have a continual living sense of God in nature, as law behind law, as the force back of all other forces. We need to feel him near us in our lives, guiding all things well, in the darkest agony and midnight of sorrow as in the brightest sunshine of triumphant joy. All mediators, prophets, bibles, religions, are for this end — to make us at last like little children ; for it is only by being converted again to the simplicity and trust of little children that we can see the kingdom of God.

The one thing we need to give us new life and new power, to give peace, strength, joy, is faith ; faith in God as infinite love. The work of Jesus is to bring us to God, his Father and ours. When he has done this, he has done all.

If, then, there are any who are longing for inward peace, who are seeking to be lifted above weakness, doubt, fear, to be in harmony with themselves, to them I say, “ You need what Paul needed and found ; what Luther needed and found ; what Wesley needed and found ; what all souls need and such multitudes have found, — a life hid with Christ in God. You need to become again the little children of your Heavenly Father, living in his presence and his smile,

and being sure that he is your best friend, here and everywhere. His love will bring to you new peace and strength every day; will quiet your struggles, pacify your unrest, be sunshine in your heart, comfort in your trials, companionship in your loneliness. This is what Jesus meant when he said: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you."

This faith in God is not contrary to reason, for it is not credulity. If a father says to his son going from home, "My son, if you are in any trouble, come to me; trust in me; I will help you;" that is not asking him to indulge in blind credulity. We believe in God; let us act as if we did,—that is faith. To profess to believe in an all-wise and all-good being, who knows all our wants, and then to live as if there were no such being, that is what is contrary to reason. To have faith in God is to act as we believe. As soon as we begin thus to act, thus to trust, thus to walk with God, our faith in him increases. We find that he really is near us. We are lifted into a higher atmosphere, where the sun always shines, where we are above the low-lying mists of doubt and fear. We feel free, able to act, able to endure.

When Paul says, "We are made just by faith," he means, that by trusting God we come to love him, to do his will. We trust him with our weakness and our sin, and feel that he will forgive us and show us how to rise above them. We trust him with our fears and doubt and unbelief, and find strength to see things

more clearly. We trust him with our coldness of heart, our poverty of soul, our weakness of temper, and find ourselves growing up into something more large and more loving. This is being justified and saved by faith. And this great principle which Paul derived from Jesus, and which gave him so much power, he has transmitted to us through the ages, and it is just as good for us all to-day as it was for him. No one is so high up as to be above it; no one is so low down as to be beneath it. Like the air of heaven, it visits the chamber of the king, the hut of the savage, the dungeon of the prisoner, and is the breath of life to them all.



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE MEANING OF THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

THE same doctrine of Justification by Faith, which we saw first developed in the Epistle to the Galatians, and which we have considered already in so many ways, reappears in its largest form in the Epistle to the Romans. It is now detached from practical issues, the heats of controversy and personal feeling. It is a statement of one of the deepest and broadest principles of universal religion. It is a discussion, the purpose of which is, "to understand what is the length, breadth, depth, and height of the love of God, which passeth knowledge."

If only we also were able to disengage our study of this epistle from modern theological and anti-theological prepossessions and prejudices! In this wonderful treatise we ascend a mount of vision, from which we look over a vast plain of thought reaching to a distant horizon where earthly speculation fades into the all-surrounding heavens. We see, far below us, the lower heights of transient debate, — Augustinianism and Pelagianism, Calvinism and Arminianism,

New School and Old School, Orthodoxy and Liberal Christianity. We stand face to face with the eternal problems of human inquiry. We breathe the upper air of pure speculation, where the noisy sounds of earthly life come up mellowed and softened from the low-lying valleys and villages. Here is serene peace, and only the noble struggle of reason in its attempts to sound the depths of everlasting law.

This letter is the most important of all Paul's works; it is one of the greatest efforts of human genius. It is full of the inspiration of a heavenly love, and compact with the most intense effort of concentrated thought. In it Paul grapples with his opponents, and pours out his heart, soul, strength, in his endeavor to convince, persuade, instruct, and convert them. The result is that, written for an immediate object, and with no thought of any future fame, it has become one of the great monuments of human intelligence, which will be studied and commented upon when the Pyramids have crumbled into the sand of the desert.<sup>1</sup>

One difficulty in understanding this epistle comes from the fact that Paul is here arguing with those whose opinions we do not know, and answering objec-

<sup>1</sup> Coleridge calls the Epistle to the Romans "the profoundest book in existence." Luther says, "This Epistle is the chief book of the New Testament." Melancthon copied it twice with his own hand. Chrysostom had it read to him twice a week. Tholuck calls it the "Christian philosophy of Universal History." See Godet and Farrar.

tions of which we have never heard. As he and his hearers both understood the objections, he does not take the trouble to state them. We must discover who the objectors were from his answers. We find that they were chiefly of two classes, the Christian Jews and the Christian Greeks. Curiously enough, there seem to have been very few Latin or Roman Christians in the Roman church. The names mentioned are Greek and Jewish, not Latin. All the early Christian writers in the Roman church wrote in Greek, as Paul does here. There was a vast multitude of Jews in Rome at this time. Augustus Cæsar, who was their friend, gave them a portion of the city in which to live, which still remains the Jewish quarter, or Ghetto, in Rome. Eight thousand Jews appeared in Rome in a procession to offer a petition to Augustus. The Greeks, too, swarmed in Rome, so that Juvenal complains that Rome is a Greek city; just as it is said that Boston is an Irish city, and that Chicago is a German city.

The Christian community in Rome had existed for a long time when Paul wrote this letter. Their "faith had been spoken of in the whole world" (i. 8). Paul had often proposed to come to them (i. 13). If this church had been founded by Peter, or if Peter were its bishop, Paul would certainly have mentioned his name, which he has not done. Nor was it his custom to "build on another man's foundation" (Rom. xv. 20). The origin of the Roman church is unknown. It was made up of Christian Jews and

Christian Greeks. The Greeks were Broad Church, the Jews Narrow Church. Since Jesus was a Jew, and became the Jewish Christ, the question was, How far must Christians be Jews, and keep the Jewish Sabbath, feasts, and ritual?

The Christian Jews said, "Christianity is the Jewish religion improved, carried forward, developed; but it is Judaism still. The Law is just as necessary as the Gospel. Therefore all who are Christians must be Christian Jews, as we are."

These Jewish Christians, or Christian Jews, regarded Jesus as essentially the Jewish Messiah, who was to be the king of the world, and would help them also to be kings, and to rule the world. They longed for power. Trampled on often, despised by the Roman patricians, they were hoping for the glorious coming of Jesus in royal majesty, to set them above their present masters. So that the Jews in Rome were more Jewish than elsewhere, — probably more so than those at Jerusalem, — just as Roman Catholics in America are often more Papal than the Pope himself. These Christian Jews shared the same intensely Judaizing spirit; and this was what Paul must meet and conquer, if Christianity was really to become a religion for the world — a human and universal religion. Paul saw that it would be hopeless to attempt to make Jews out of the Greeks and Romans; but he could lift them all to a higher point of view, where their differences would disappear, and all would become one in Christ Jesus.

To this work he addresses himself, and begins by asking, What is religion for? What is all religion for? What is the Pagan religion, the Jewish religion, the Christian religion for? <sup>1</sup>

By asking this question he goes behind the controversies existing at Rome between these two parties. His purpose was to unite the Greek and Jewish Christians in a larger faith than either already possessed, — to carry them up to a position which overlooked both sides. The Romans thought they did not need Judaism; the Jews thought the Romans ought to accept their law. Paul shows them that they both need goodness; and the root of goodness he declares to be the Gospel which is revealed by Jesus Christ.

Paul's theme (Rom. i. 17) is that "goodness lives by faith." This is "the righteousness of God;" that is, righteousness as God looks at it, not as men see it. It is not outward, but inward; not in appearance,

<sup>1</sup> Very different views are taken of the object of this Epistle. Locke says, "to persuade them to a steady perseverance in the profession of Christianity, by convincing them that God is the God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews." Olshausen sees in it "a purely objective statement of the nature of the Gospel." Baur and others suppose that Paul intended by this letter "to refute Jewish particularism so radically that it should remain like an uprooted tree." "The absolute nullity of every claim founded on particularism, such is the fundamental idea of the Epistle." Others consider it his special purpose to conciliate the Jewish and Gentile Christians. So Hilgenfeld and Holsten, who consider it a letter of peace and union. A large number of commentators (including Origen, Calvin, Grotius) regard it as having a simply didactic purpose. Reuss says that Paul "is addressing an ideal public." Renan considers it a *résumé* of his teaching.

but in reality. This is "the righteousness of God," which comes out of faith as its root, and grows up into a good life as trunk and branches, making a living and fruitful tree.

"And do we not need it?" he asks. "Do not all need it? Do not all — Jew and Greek and Roman — know that they are not what they ought to be? Is there not a sense of divine displeasure hanging over the human mind and heart, in all lands and times? Are not all men conscious of sin, therefore of discontent, unrest, misery? Is not the human race drifting away from God? Look at the vice which is eating out the heart of the people of Rome, the people of Greece. What can your philosophy do against it? Unbridled luxury, joined with terrible cruelty, is all around you; the old Roman virtues dying out; a sense of helplessness in you all. Oh, Romans! Oh, Greeks! — children of glorious ancestors! do you not need some new and higher influence to stay this corruption, and give you a new power of growing upright, just, pure, true, in the sight of God?"<sup>1</sup>

Having thus shown what the Greeks and Romans need, Paul turns to the Jewish Christians (Rom. ii. 1-29), and devotes a long paragraph to proving to them that they had not the least right to judge and

<sup>1</sup> This passage (Rom. i. 18-32), in which Paul describes the gross depravity of the Greek and Roman world of his time, is meant to show that the one thing needful was some power which should cure these terrible moral evils — some new principle of goodness.



condemn the Gentiles, since, though they had the law, they did not obey it. He virtually says to them : —<sup>1</sup>

“Do you propose to cure this inveterate evil among the Romans and Greeks by inviting them to become Jews, and to go through your ritual and keep your fasts and feasts? Have these made you so much better that you can promise that they will cure the sin of others? You think yourselves sent to be the teachers of the moral law to mankind. Why do you not keep it, then? You teach them sedulously the Ten Commandments — ‘Thou shalt not steal,’ ‘Thou shalt not covet.’ Do you never steal, never covet? Your law does not promise, ‘Whoever sayeth these things shall live by them,’ but, ‘Whoever doeth these things shall live by them.’ The Gentiles neither say

<sup>1</sup> “It cannot be sufficiently admired how skilfully, to avoid offending those of his own nation, St. Paul here enters into an argument so unpleasing to the Jews as this of persuading them that the Gentiles had as good a title to be taken in to be the people of God, under the Messias, as they themselves, — which is the main design of this Epistle.

“This may be seen if one carefully attends to the particulars that he mentions relating to the Jews and Gentiles; and observes how what he says of the Jews, in the second chapter, answers to what he had charged on the Gentiles in the first. For there is a secret comparison of them, one with another, runs through these two chapters, which, as soon as it comes to be minded, gives such a light and lustre to St. Paul’s discourse that one cannot but admire the skilful turn of it, and look on it as the most soft, the most beautiful, and most pressing argumentation that one shall any where meet with altogether; since it leaves the Jews nothing to say for themselves, why they should have the privilege continued to them, under the Gospel, of being alone the people of God.” — LOCKE, on the Epistles of Paul.

them nor do them. You *say* them, but how often do you *do* them?" (Rom. iii. 1.)

And now speaks a Jewish Christian in reply: "If keeping the law of God and all the works it commands does us no good, then why was the law given? If the Sabbath and sacrifices and Synagogue worship make us no better than the Romans, why did God, through Moses, command us to do all this? Answer that, if thou canst, thou Gentile Apostle!"

This is an amplification of a single line, but no doubt it was often said to Paul by his Jewish opponents. Paul had closed his appeal to the Jew by making the bold assertion that "He is not a Jew who is one outwardly, but he is a Jew who is one inwardly." The reply to this was, "What good then does this outward law do, and why was it given?"

The first reply of Paul to this is, "You have the great honor of being the teachers to mankind of God's unity and his moral law. For though many of you have been faithless to your high mission, this does not impair the glory which God has given to your nation (Rom. iii. 2)."

If we may amplify still more the answer of Paul, by bringing together what he has said in several other places, we can put it in this form:—

"The law does you good, because it prepares you for something better. It creates in you a desire for goodness which it does not satisfy. The Gentiles are not conscious of their degradation; you are, and that is something. The law does not make you alive, but it

shows you that you are dead. It rouses your conscience, awakens a sense of responsibility, and thus prepares you, before all others, for that higher revelation which shall unite your hearts with God in faith and trust.

“But,” continues Paul, “you can become good, really good — inwardly and outwardly — only by faith; that is, by trusting in God as you trust in a friend, and thus learning to love him. Faith in God as pure goodness is what we all need, and it is the only thing that can make us better. Only when we love God can we obey him with our whole heart, and we cannot love till we believe in him as infinite, perfect goodness. So Christ reveals him. Trust in Christ as able to reveal the true God, and you have a seed of goodness planted in your heart; which is the one thing needful, both for Jew and Greek.

“You cannot love any one unless you have faith in his goodness; you cannot love God unless you have faith in his goodness. You cannot love God from a sense of duty, nor because you have determined to love him, nor because he commands you to love him, nor because you are afraid you will be punished if you do not love him. You can only love him when he seems lovely, when you see in him a never-tiring desire to bless and help his creatures, a longing for their good, readiness to forgive, inspire, guide, help, and save his feeble, imperfect, and sinful children. When you see these characters in God you can love him.

"Jesus comes to show us just these qualities in God. He teaches his impartial love, which lets his sun shine on the evil and the good, and sends his rain on the just and unjust. He teaches the providential love of God, which numbers every hair on our heads, and to which we may safely trust in all needs. He teaches the pitying love of God towards the sinner who has wandered into a far country, and which rejoices when he returns. He teaches the pardoning love of God, by which we have peace in our souls when we repent of our sin. He teaches the saving love of God, which saves to the uttermost all who come to him in this faith."<sup>1</sup>

In chapter iv. the question concerning Abraham is raised. Was he justified (made just in the sight of God) by faith or by works. The Epistle of James (the expression of the Jerusalem Christian church) says decidedly, "by works" (James ii. 21). Paul says, "by faith." The Epistle of James no doubt has Paul's doctrine in view. James wished to guard that doctrine from its abuse. He does not distinctly contradict Paul, but says that works must be included with faith as a condition of becoming just before God. ("By works is faith made perfect.") He adds the illustration, "for, as the body without the spirit is

<sup>1</sup> The important and difficult passage (Rom. iii. 23-27) I shall have occasion to explain in a subsequent chapter. The distinction (ver. 30.) indicated by the two prepositions *ἐκ* and *διὰ* is probably this, that justification will come to the Jews *from God's faith* in keeping his promise, and to the Gentiles *through their faith* in the divine love.

dead, so faith without works is also dead." Paul would have reversed it, and said, "Faith is the spirit, and works are the body; and works without faith are a body without life."

Paul would have agreed with James, that works of love are such a natural and necessary outflow from genuine faith, that they may be considered a part of it. Only he would have said, "Have faith, in order to be able to work."

To the question, "How shall a man become really good — good in the sight of God?" — there are these two answers: "*Be* good in order to do good," and "*Do* good in order to *be* good." The first was Paul's answer, the second was that of James; and ever since, these two answers have been given by opposing parties in the church. The Roman Catholics follow James, and say, "To be right before God you must *do* what the church commands, — accept its authority, receive its sacraments, keep in its outward visible communion by regular confession and absolution. All this will work inwardly upon your heart and soul, and keep them pure." The Protestants commonly follow Paul, and say, "Your works are dead works, the mere letter of morality, unless inspired by the right motives. Begin, then, with the inward life. Be born again. Live in the right spirit, a spirit of generous love, of trust and hope, and then you will naturally and easily do right actions. Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good; for a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit."



It is easy to see that there is truth in both of these views. The effort to do right actions will improve and elevate the motives. If a selfish man does a generous deed, his deed will react on his heart, and he will be more likely to do it again. A good action, done from *any* motive except a bad one, tends in itself to make one better. So far the Roman Catholic theory, and that of James, is sound. Those who lead good and pure lives are more likely, in the long run, to rise into the love of God and be influenced by it, than those who lead bad lives.

On the other hand, it is equally plain that the Pauline doctrine is profoundly true. Only the works which are full of love have a savor of life, and these spring from faith in goodness. The more of faith in all good that we have, the more of good we shall be able to do.

It is evident, then, that it is not wise to neglect either method. We must not wait before we do right until we are sure that we have the right motive. This is the mischievous extreme which Calvinism reached, when it declared that all good works done before conversion were odious to God, and were merely "splendid vices." On the other hand, we must not neglect the influences which lift the soul nearer to God, and inspire it with love for noble things.

Paul's statement concerning Abraham (Rom. iv. 1-25) may be thus paraphrased:—

"What shall we say concerning our Father Abraham? Did he reach his position of Father of the



Faithful, by works? Certainly not. All that *man* can judge by is what he sees of the outward conduct. But God sees the heart, and the inward motive. [‘He hath whereof to glory, but not toward God’ (ver. 2).] Abraham’s trust in God made him fit to be the Father of the Faithful [‘it was counted for righteousness’ (ver. 3)].<sup>1</sup> When he was selected for his work, it was not any right which he had earned, it was simply a favor. If it were given him in consequence of his works, he might have thought that he had earned it. When God pardons the sinner, it is the same. It is pure favor. The sinner has not earned a right to be pardoned. He only trusts in his Father’s goodness (ver. 4 and 5). [Then Paul quotes from a Psalm in proof of this (ver. 6 to 8).]

“Now this divine favor came to Abraham before he was ritually a Jew. The ritual ceremony had not taken place when he received the promise. He was accepted while a heathen, on account of his faith. He is therefore the Father of the heathen who have a like faith, and God will accept and pardon them also (iv. 10–11). And the true descent from Abra-

<sup>1</sup> The same Greek word is translated in this chapter by three English words, “counted,” “imputed,” and “reckoned.” The revised version has only the word “reckoned” in all these cases. We might use the word “considered,” as making a better sense. The faith of Abraham was considered the same thing as action—because it showed how he *would* act when the occasion came. It was taken as a proof that he was fit for the work given him to do. He might be depended on. And this is the whole meaning of the expression from which has resulted the famous doctrine of “imputed righteousness.”

ham is to walk in his steps (ver. 12). When it was said to him that ‘through his descendants all the families of the earth should be blessed,’ this was meant for the spiritual descendants who possess his faith. His bodily descendants, the Jews, are under the law, and the blessing promised does not come by the law. For the law merely rouses the sense of sin, and faith alone gives the sense of pardon and safety (ver. 13–15).<sup>1</sup> Therefore we are the children of Abraham when we have a faith like his, and can believe that though we are dead we can be made alive, and though without goodness we can be made good (ver. 16 to the end).”

In the fifth chapter we are told that the results of this method of reaching goodness through faith, are peace and hope — peace in the present, hope in the future : —

“This faith in God’s love creates an answering love. We love much because we are forgiven much. Where sin abounds grace yet more abounds. We love God because he first loved us. God seems always near, a heavenly friend ; it is easy to pray to him, and lay all our wants before him ; and in the strength of this love we can do infinitely more than we can from a sense of duty, or from any mere effort of will. We are justified by this faith, — that is, made good by it ; and we have peace with God through Jesus Christ. Love fulfils the law, resists temptation, works right-

<sup>1</sup> The discussion as to the relation of the law to sin will be found elsewhere in this volume.

eousness, and rejoices in the hope of the glory of God (Rom. v. 1).

“We can even find some joy in our trials. They teach us patience, and when we can patiently endure trial we become sure of ourselves [‘patience worketh experience’], and when we are sure of ourselves, we have hope of something better, which drives out of our soul remorse and self-distrust [‘hope makes us not to be ashamed’]. This is through the love of God, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Christ gave himself willingly to death to help all men to become good before God. He did not come to help us after we had made ourselves good, but to help the bad to become good. If God loved us so much when we knew nothing of him and cared nothing about him, will he not certainly continue to help us, now that we have come to know him? If the death of Christ brought us to God, his heavenly life which we now know and love will at last give us full salvation” (ver. 3–11).

Here follows the difficult passage (ver. 12–21) in relation to Adam and Christ, which we have already discussed in chapter vii. but which we will again examine here.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This passage (ver. 12–21) is a curious illustration of the way in which Paul’s thoughts became entangled and involved by the rushing velocity of his mental action; and in which he preserves the sequence of his argument through all. If we disentangle the ideas we shall see that he is making a contrast in which every thing said of Adam is set against something said of Christ.

1. By the offence of one (ver. 12),
2. Sin entered the world (ver. 12).
3. Death came through sin (ver. 12).

1. By the righteousness of one (ver. 18),
2. Came justification to life (ver. 18).
3. Life came by righteousness (ver. 18).

It is no doubt an answer to an objection which had been urged from the point of view of Greek thought. The objection itself is not given, but it might have taken some such form as this: "What you say, O Paul, is reasonable in the principle. I perceive that whatever makes us love God will enable us better to obey him. We can do no work well that we merely do with our hands and not with our heart. No one can become a poet or artist by willing it, or from a sense of duty. He must love his work, to do it well. But why has the infinite and almighty God waited till now to teach us this, and taught us this truth, so essential to our peace, by the voice of one man, born in Syria? Does God's truth come into the world by any one man? Does he not give it to all men?"

The substance of Paul's reply is this: "If one man introduces sin into the world, why should not one man introduce goodness into the world? The first man who sinned and set an example of evil, and poisoned the blood of his race, has drawn every one of us down to a lower plane, and made us more liable to yield to temptation. Every single man who does wrong spreads an evil influence over all the human race who

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|---|--|
| 4. Death passed on all (ver. 12),                                     | 4. Life came to all (ver. 18),                                 |
| 5. Even on those who had broken no positive law, like Adam (ver. 14). | 5. Even to those who had done nothing to deserve it (ver. 15). |
| 6. By the trespass of one man,  | 6. By the grace of one man (ver. 15),                          |
| 7. Many are dead (ver. 15).   | 7. Life abounds to many.                                       |
| 8. By the offence of one,   | 8. By the righteousness of one,                                |
| 9. All are condemned (ver. 16).                                       | 9. All are justified (ver. 17).                                |
| 10. By one man's disobedience (ver. 19),                              | 10. By the obedience of one (ver. 19),                         |
| 11. Many become sinners (ver. 19).                                    | 11. Many are made righteous (ver. 19).                         |
| 12. By the coming of the law, more guilt (ver. 20).                   | 12. But where more guilt, there is more grace (ver. 20).       |

come after. Every single man who does right makes it easier for all other men to do right. If death enters the world by one man, why shall not life enter the world by one man, since through one it will reach all? Spiritual death, you must admit, had its beginning in one man's sin. Why shall not spiritual life have its beginning in one man's perfect virtue?"

This is the real meaning of the passage which has been made the foundation of that strange doctrine, the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity. The purpose of Paul was not to teach anything about Adam, but to show that Christ might be the beginning of a new order of spiritual life. So also in the other passage in which he draws a parallel between Adam and Christ, in the 15th chapter of First Corinthians: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." There is nothing there about our sinning in Adam. The meaning is, "We die as men, we live as Christians." Death, beginning with Adam, passes to the whole race; a new life, beginning with Christ, also passes on to the whole race.

Paul, with his large philosophy, saw and accepted the facts which have since been formulated under the phrase "the solidarity of race." Knowing and teaching the personal freedom and personal responsibility of each separate soul, as every sane man must know it, maintaining thus the inviolable private conscience, and the sacred law of responsibility, he taught no crude individualism. As every bud in the tree has a life of its own, and yet partakes of the life of the



tree, so every soul has its own solitude of personal responsibility, which no other being can penetrate. Every man must bear his own burden, do his own duty, go alone to judgment. Yet we must all bear each others' burdens. No man liveth to himself nor dieth to himself. We are many members, yet one body. The life of the race flows into us; the characters of our ancestors are reproduced in us; we take inevitably the tone of our surroundings; we are fed with the same intellectual and moral food as those among whom we live. We are many members, but one body.

Paul accepts the fact which we all know, — that tendencies to evil are in our blood, and descend from our ancestors, just as tendencies to good are inherited. But we are not responsible for them; we are responsible only for what we do ourselves.

In this passage appears Paul's view of the organic unity of the human race, which we shall have occasion to meet again, more than once. If one suffer, all suffer; if one rejoices all are happy. Thrills of life and of death run through humanity. Each man gives his impulse to the whole life of mankind.

In this passage also Paul indicates his theory of the final cause of sin. God permits sin to enter the world, because by his pardoning love a much greater amount of grateful affection blossoms out in the human heart. Sin furnishes the occasion for the manifestation of that wonderful grace which would have all men to be saved. Moreover, the good which comes to us from



Christ far outweighs the evil which comes from Adam. Where sin abounds grace abounds still more. Evil is transformed by faith into a higher good. The worse we are, the more we feel the goodness of God and Christ in our redemption.

The speculative Greek mind immediately seized on this statement, and formulated another objection: "If we love much because we are forgiven much, if we see God's love in his forgiving sin, is it not a good thing to sin, since it produces such gratitude when our sin is forgiven? Shall we not continue in sin that grace may abound?" (Rom. vi. 1.)

Paul answers this in a word: "The sense of God's love kills in our souls all wish to sin, and creates a love for goodness. It makes it impossible for us to wish to sin (vi. 2)." If Paul had thought it worth while to continue the argument, he might have added this illustration: "In proportion to our ignorance we enjoy and are delighted with new knowledge. But you would not say, 'Let us continue ignorant, in order that our delight in knowledge shall be greater.'" The answer to these logical difficulties is that every step upward makes us more averse to the lower life, and more in love with all good things.

"What," continues Paul, "is the meaning of baptism? It means passing through a change like death into a higher life, as Christ passed through death to his higher life. We are dead to evil and alive to good; companions with Christ in his death and resurrection. But as the heavenly life of Christ will

continue, and he cannot die again, so our new life of faith and love must continue. We must refuse to submit to sin, and not let it master us again (vi. 3-14). I thank God that this service to sin is over, since now our heart goes into our obedience (ver. 17). When you were servants of sin, the only fruit you had consisted in those things of which you are now ashamed (ver. 21)."

In the seventh chapter, the Apostle goes into a profound analysis of the influence of law, or pure command, or mere authority, on the character. The law, appealing to conscience, commands and takes no excuse. It is what Kant calls "the categorical imperative." Paul contends that we have passed up from this domain of law, through faith in Christ, into that of Love. He even identifies the power of the law over us with the power of sin (vii. 1-6), in the illustration of the freedom of a wife to marry, after the death of her husband. There is a little confusion in the statement, for he does not like to say that the law is sin (ver. 7), or that the law is dead.<sup>1</sup> His idea is that the soul was bound to sin by the law; but by dying to sin, it is delivered from the bondage of the law and the control of sin, and enters into the glorious freedom of the sons of God.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The same idea is expressed by Wordsworth, in his "Ode to Duty," who, however, limits it more cautiously :

"Serene will be our days and bright,  
And happy will our nature be,  
When Love is an unerring light,  
And joy its own security.

The remaining part of this chapter (vii. 7-25) describes the struggle of the soul to obey the law of duty, when the lower nature is drawing it the other way. This very striking passage, which goes down into the depths of human experience, we have considered elsewhere. It ends in the deliverance of the soul from this bondage, by the sight of the forgiving love of God in Jesus Christ.

But forgiveness is not the highest gift of the Gospel; there is something higher which comes after it. And in the chapter which follows this argument, the Apostle rises into a noble strain of exulting adoration. When we come to see and feel that God is love, when we enter into his peace, then all our thoughts turn into a new channel. We think no longer of sin and death, but only of life and peace. We are no more anxious about our souls; we trust our souls to God. We dwell in the spirit of God, and the spirit of God dwells in us. We are not led downward, but upward; we do not think of evil things, but of good things. Before, religion was a very solemn duty — not attractive, but necessary. But now it means being in the presence of all goodness, loving everything true and noble, feeling sure that God is our Father, and that we are his children; sure that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us;

And blest are they, who, in the main,  
This faith, even now, do entertain;  
Live in the spirit of this creed,  
Yet have that other strength, according to their need."

sure that all things work for good while we love God. For it is no accident that we are to be saved, but this is what God has always intended. When he created us he foresaw all that we should be; he meant that we should be at last formed into the image of Jesus. And all that has happened since has been by the providence of God, — that we have heard of Jesus, listened to his words, been brought by him to say Our Father, been made sensible of the heavenly compassion. All this ought to show us that God is loving us, and that he means to do more for us; that we shall never be separated from his love; that no temptation, no misfortune, no sorrow, will be allowed to take us away from him; that neither death, nor life, nor all the powers of darkness, nor anything which can happen in this world or the next, neither the inflexible laws of nature, nor the relentless order of the universe, shall take us away from his divine love, which Christ has given us to see and to know (Rom. viii. 28–39).

After this strain of celestial music, and after an expression of intense love and sympathy for the future of his own nation,<sup>1</sup> Paul passes on to the most admirable advice in regard to Christian conduct and character. He begs his disciples to devote their lives to all good things, to be faithful in every duty, to feel that they all belong to the same body, and that

<sup>1</sup> The passage (Romans ix., x., xi.) which discusses the present and future condition of the Jewish nation, will be considered in chapter xv., in examining Paul's view of Predestination.

all need each other. What especially strikes us in his exhortation is its fine discrimination. There are no vague generalities about being good, but the happiest distinctions flow spontaneously from his mind. The man who gives must avoid ostentation ; let him give "with simplicity." He who forgives a fault ought not to do it as though the forgiveness was dragged out of him, but should forgive "cheerfully." Let our love for each other be natural, unpretending, "without dissimulation." He advises no impracticable virtue. "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." As it takes two to make a quarrel, so it takes two to make peace. A modern critic objects to this that "it lets down the authority of moral obligation, implying that peace is not always possible, and not always to be expected." I do not think that peace is always possible. All that we can do, Paul requires, and no more, and I praise his judgment in this. He shows more insight than his critic. "As much as lieth in *you*," he says, "live peaceably with all men." I do not see how we can be properly asked to do more than all that lieth in *us* to do. And Paul adds that "if our enemy hunger we should feed him, and if he thirst give him drink, for, in so doing, we shall heap coals of fire on his head." This being quoted once in a discussion, a very literal man objected to it, as though Paul told us that we must burn our enemy up. "No," was the reply, "but melt him down." It is a figurative expression, derived from the method, probably the same



in ancient times as now, of smelting ore. If you have seen an iron-furnace, you know that the fuel is put in at the top, with the ore and lime-stone or other flux. But the critic, before referred to, imagines that Paul's purpose was to inflict tenfold more agony on his enemy by showing him kindness." So prosaic is criticism, and so disposed to literalness. It does not see that the whole tone and temper of the Apostle breathes a spirit of forgiving love. It fails to notice that the very next verse tells us to overcome evil with good. Nor does it observe that in the next chapter Paul sums up all duty in love. All the other commandments are comprised, fulfilled, and briefly comprehended in this, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

The Jews were always disposed to revolt against the Roman power. Paul expects the Jewish Christians in Rome to be obedient to the government and to pay their taxes, because the chief object of government is to maintain order and put down crime. The emperors, with all their vices, did protect the provinces from extortion. The emperor at this time was Nero, — but Nero in his early reign, when he was yet a modest and just ruler.

The next chapter gives a lesson to the Jewish and Gentile members of the church, and it would be well if it had been more heeded. "Respect each other's conscientious differences," he says. If a man is conscientious, even though his conscience is too scrupulous, respect his honesty. He tells the Broad-Churchman, the Liberal Christian, "not to despise"



the narrow zealot; and he tells the narrow zealot, not "to judge" the Liberal Christian. In this choice of words, the keen penetration of the Apostle is again shown. The narrow-minded bigot *judges* and condemns with intolerance the man whose views are broader than his own. He calls him infidel, atheist, enemy of God, who is sure to inherit eternal damnation. On the other hand, the Liberal Christian *despises* the narrower zealot, and treats him with contempt. How happy, then, is Paul's selection of language: "Let not the emancipated Christian, who sees no sin in eating and drinking all things, despise the man who is more contracted. And let not the man who thinks himself bound to some special obedience, undertake to judge and sentence the other who does not agree with him."

The temptation of liberality is always to despise illiberality; the temptation of illiberality is always to judge and condemn liberality. Paul, in his admirable argument against both extremes, says to one party, "If thy brother is weak and too scrupulous, do not outrage his honest scruples, but treat him tenderly. If he is weak, bear his infirmities, and give up a little of your own liberty, so as not to wound his feelings." To the other he says, "Why judge a man for honestly forming his own opinion? You are not his master. You think the Sabbath ought to be kept in a certain way. He does not. He, then, is serving God in not keeping it, just as you are serving God in keeping it."

I have thus attempted to sketch, in brief outlines, the purpose of the apostle Paul in this Epistle. When Horace published his odes, confident of his future fame, he said, "I have erected a monument which will outlast those of stone and bronze." And Horace was right; such immortality has sweet song. Paul did not foretell for himself such an earthly immortality,—probably did not foresee it; for he was not thinking of himself, but of the good of those to whom he wrote. But God suffers no true word, which man needs, to fall to the ground. Thus, over the ruins of empires, the destruction of old religions and institutions, floating on the deluge which has overwhelmed creeds and nations, this little treatise of Paul has drifted down to our day, and is still profitable for warning, rebuke, consolation and instruction.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE PRACTICAL WISDOM OF PAUL.

THE subject of this chapter is the Practical Good Sense of the Apostle Paul, especially as shown in his advice to the Christians in Corinth.

We should hardly expect beforehand to find this quality in our Apostle. We think of him chiefly as a man of extreme zeal and ardent enthusiasm; and zeal and enthusiasm are often deficient in practical judgment. We also think of him as deeply interested in certain speculative doctrines concerning the relations of Judaism to Christianity. Those who care a great deal for speculation do not often engage with success in practical operations. But Paul was conspicuous in all three of these directions, — in ardent religious zeal, clear reasoning, and wise conduct.

What, then, constitutes practical wisdom? I think that two elements go to compose it, — first, a clear view of the end; and, secondly, a wise adaptation of the means to the end thus seen.

The end of the gospel is to create love to God and man. Many Christians lose sight of this object, and

endeavor to build up a sect or party, to diffuse a creed, to put down heretics, or to keep things in the old routine. Others, again, devote themselves to speculation, to developing new systems and seeking for new truths. A truly practical Christian is one who never loses sight of the aim; which is to get good and do good, to bring men to God and heaven. For this end he adopts all judicious means; if one method does not do, he tries another, and so, at last he will probably succeed.

In dealing with the church in Corinth it was very necessary to use this kind of practical wisdom. It was a difficult community to guide. In the first place, it was a large and heterogeneous body, containing narrow-minded Jews, free-thinking Gentiles, rich and poor, philosophers and slaves, Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, Barbarians. Some received Christianity as a new system of philosophy, which was to take the place of the schools of Plato and Zeno. To others it was a supernatural power which was to put down imperial Rome and make Christians masters of the world. Besides this, the new converts from heathendom had brought with them into Christianity habits of vice and self-indulgence. All these tendencies were hidden, at first, in the immense enthusiasm of new converts. While Paul stayed with them, which was more than eighteen months, his influence guided and restrained them. The Christian body grew larger every day, and had in it the power of numbers, wealth, and high philosophic culture. But Paul went away,

and while he was laboring in Ephesus, beyond the Ægean Sea, the seeds of discord ripened, sects were formed, parties sprang up, luxury and selfishness came in. One of these parties professed to be emancipated from all moral restraint, and called this, "freedom of the spirit." They said, "To a Christian everything is lawful. We are dead to the law of works." This party professed to be followers of Paul himself, and quoted his doctrine of justification by faith in their defence. The speculative Christians followed Apollos, a Jew of Alexandria, probably a disciple of Philo. The Jewish party said they believed as the apostle Peter believed, and that the Jewish law ought to be obeyed. Then there was a fourth body, of those who said they followed no apostle, but the Messiah himself, and claimed to know him by prophetic power, and to speak in tongues in an ecstasy of inspiration. To them there was no resurrection of the dead; they were risen already, and were with Christ now, and he with them. So there were four parties in Corinth,—the Philosophical Christians, followers of Apollos; the Emancipated Christians, followers of Paul; the Judaizing Christians, followers of Peter; and the Mystics, who claimed to belong only to the risen Messiah.

Let us see the judgment which Paul showed in treating this divided church.

1. He begins by giving them credit for what was good in their body, before condemning their errors. He thanks God that they are rich "in utterance and

knowledge." They were highly gifted in eloquent language and keen insight. That was their merit. It always shows good sense, if you have to find fault with any one, that you should first recognize whatever he does well. Then he sees that you mean to do him justice, that you are not prejudiced against him, and he will be more willing to listen to your subsequent criticism. This Corinthian church stood at the head of all others for intelligence, culture and activity of mind.

From this came the evil. They laid too much stress on theoretic knowledge. They made Christianity too much a matter of intellectual speculation. Then they broke up into parties. Beginning with dogmatism, they ended in sectarianism. Thus began in the Christian Church those two great evils, which have not yet ceased.

2. All laid too much stress on doctrine; but the party of Apollos went the furthest in this direction. Apollos was a powerful reasoner, and had converted many Jews to Christianity by his arguments and his eloquence. But he did not perceive the danger of making speculation so prominent among a people already prone to debate and discussion. Paul had seen this danger, and here is another instance of his good sense. He says to them, When I came among you, I came not with excellency of speech nor of wisdom. My gospel was neither logic nor rhetoric, theory nor abstraction; but a statement of facts. I fed you with milk, and not meat; I merely told you



the story of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. If I had thought it best, I could have gone into the deepest truths ever revealed to man. But you were not able to bear them then, nor are you able to bear them now. There is something better than speculation and argument, for the world never found God by the way of pure intellect. The world by wisdom knew not God. God is to be seen spiritually, by the insight of the heart rather than of the head. With the loving heart man believes unto righteousness. Spiritual things must be spiritually discerned. Every object has its own organ by which it is perceived; outward objects by the senses, logical arguments by the reason, and spiritual things by the spirit. The experience of a loving heart and a pure soul goes deeper than words or thought.

The second chapter may be thus paraphrased:—

“When I came to you, I used neither rhetoric nor logic. I made no oration. I merely stated facts. I was determined to tell you about Jesus, and nothing else, including his death of cruelty and ignominy. I was anxious, depressed, and timid, and seemed to have lost my courage. All the power in my words came from God; and so your faith was not founded on an argument or logical demonstration, the work of human intelligence, but a personal conviction coming to you from a divine influence.

“It is true we exercise our reason, and that we, your Apostles, have a system of religious thought; but it is not the kind of philosophy which this age re-

ceives and loves, nor which its leading minds [‘princes of this world’] teach. But to those who are prepared for it, we teach a Divine Wisdom; which is as yet undeveloped [‘in a mystery’], and not come to consciousness in human thought, but which by God’s providence will be the philosophy of future ages. None of the ruling intellects of this age have seen it, for if they had, could they have crucified the Master Spirit of our time [Lord of Glory]? For, as Isaiah says, ‘The things which God hath prepared for loving hearts are not seen with the outward eye, or heard with the ear. But God shows them to us by his inner illumination; for inspiration, the intuitive faculty in man, looks into the deepest truths of God. As in every man’s soul are things known only to himself, and which he must tell us, else we do not know them, so there are divine truths, not seen outwardly in nature, but only to be known by the light of inspiration. The spirit which speaks to us is not of the outward cosmos [κόσμον. Before this, the word translated “world” has been αἰὼν], but of inflowing grace, teaching us of the free gifts of God. And this we teach, in language corresponding to the theme; not in the vocabulary of science, but in words prompted by the spirit—explaining spiritual facts in spiritual language.”

He returns to this theme again in the thirteenth chapter, when he says that only faith, hope, and love are lasting; that eloquence however subtle, knowledge however keen, without love, have nothing solid

in them. He thus goes to the root of the matter. He does not attempt to prove either party wrong in its opinions; but says that, no matter how right they are, if they have ceased to love each other, all their correct opinions are of no value.

3. This contentious habit of mind produced disputes which, it seems, often ended in litigation. They carried their quarrels before the Roman courts. This, necessarily, checked the progress of Christianity. As long as the Romans said, "See how these Christians love one another!" the gospel attracted human hearts toward itself. When they said, "See! How these Christians quarrel together!" the influence of Christ's life was arrested. It is so even now. When a church has a dispute, and carries it before a court of law, it is taken to mean that Christianity in that church has not enough power to produce peace. How the Roman judges must have sneered at the new religion, which had to ask their aid to reconcile and settle its disputes in business matters and money questions! Paul suggests that they adopt the method of arbitration; that they appoint arbitrators from among themselves; the most ignorant of their number, he says, ought to be able to settle such questions as these. Have they no one among them wise enough to decide such mere money disputes, when by the very nature of the gospel they were to judge the world, to settle questions between men and angels? Here is seen the profound faith of Paul in the great hope of the gospel. No matter how low down was the actual

life of these Christians, he holds firmly to the grand ideal. "You have in you the principle," he says, "which is to judge mankind, which is to triumph over the hostilities of nations, to put an end to all earthly war, and yet you cannot decide a matter of a few sesterii without calling a Roman judge to help you. Better suffer yourselves to be defrauded, better submit to wrong, than thus make your religion a subject of contempt among the heathen."

4. The next illustration of Paul's wisdom is his method of dealing with those who exaggerated his own doctrine of Christian freedom. These men said, "Christianity is freedom. We are not bound to any Jewish rules about Sabbath-keeping, nor bound to avoid all contact with idol worship. The Jewish party tells us it is wrong to go near an idol feast, to be seen in the streets where a procession in honor of Aphrodite or Zeus is passing by, even to buy a piece of meat which has made part of an animal sacrificed to idols. But such scruples as these are absurd. An idol is a mere piece of stone. What harm can it do us? It does not make the meat any worse, that it has been a part of an offering in a heathen temple. We have a right to follow our own conscience in all such matters."

Paul was, as we have seen, the great champion of Christian freedom. He defended the rights of the Gentiles against all attempts to impose on them the yoke of the Jewish law. But he said here, "Though we must maintain our rights against all efforts to

coerce and compel us, yet we may voluntarily abstain from using them, out of tenderness to the scruples of others. All things are lawful to me," says he, "but all things are not expedient. Be tender toward weak consciences. I know that no meat is unclean in itself, no innocent action irreligious; I know that an idol is nothing; I have a right to buy in the market anything that is sold there, just as if no idol worship existed. But if it hurts the feelings of my brethren, if it wounds their consciences to see me do it, I will abstain. It is not my duty to eat the meat from an idol's altar; I can abstain out of love to my brethren."

This distinction is one which will never be useless. We need to apply it every day. As long as there are good men and women who are narrow and prejudiced, it is wrong needlessly to wound their prejudices, when no principle is involved. If we live in a village where the people have been taught to think it wrong to have any amusement on Sunday, we should say, "There is no harm in itself in playing on the violin, or taking a drive with one's family on Sunday; but if it hurts our neighbor's feelings we will abstain. All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient."

He returns to this subject afterward, and appeals to those emancipated Christians who despised the narrow prejudices of the Jewish party. "You think," says he, "you have larger knowledge than they. You are advanced thinkers, rational and liberal Christians,



no slaves to the letter. That is true. You are right in your principle. In knowledge you are higher than these brethren. But love is more than knowledge. Knowledge regards the form of things. Love alone makes life solid, real, substantial. Knowledge puffs up; love builds up. If you love your brethren you will sacrifice some of your rights, so as not to wound their consciences. What is right to you would be wrong for them. Every man has his own gift from the Lord, some after this fashion, others after that. It may be good and right for you to follow these high convictions, but it may be better still to sacrifice your right to do it, out of tenderness to a weak brother. For if some things are good, others are better; and love, which bears, and is patient, and tender, and gentle, — that is the best of all."

One more argument he uses with these Pauline Christians, his own followers: "Am not *I* an apostle? Am not *I* free? These notions of freedom, this broad Christianity, you have learned from me. But do I claim all my rights? I have the right to a support, but I give it up. I work with my hands. I do not wish to run the risk of being thought to preach for a living. In some places I am willing to be helped; not here. In this city of luxury and self-indulgence I am bound to show that a Christian can make sacrifices of his own ease and comfort. I sacrifice my rights for your good. My one aim is to advance the cause of Christ. Whatever will help this, I do. From what may hinder it, I abstain.



Shall not I do as much for Christ as your gladiators do in your Corinthian theatres? Their object is to conquer, and for this end they train themselves, deny their appetites, go through an incredible amount of exercise and labor. They fight, not merely to fight, but to win. They do not say, 'I have satisfied my conscience; I have acted up to my standard of duty.' No, they run the race, meaning to win it. My object is to save souls, not merely to do my duty; not merely to say what I think true; not simply to do what I think right. If I strike, it is to hit, not to beat the air. If I run, it is to win. This is the superiority of love to knowledge, that it is not satisfied until it has really blessed and helped its fellow-man."

It is in this place that he makes the statement, often misconstrued and misunderstood, that he became "all things to all men." "To the Jew," he says, "I became a Jew; to the Gentile, a Gentile; to the weak, I became weak; that I might win some, that I might gain the weak, that I might bring all to the gospel."

No doubt there is a danger here. We may pretend to be what we are not, in order to make a good impression. We may assume the aspect of liberality to please liberal people, and the aspect of orthodoxy to win orthodox people. This is Jesuitical and false.

But there is a true way of becoming all things to all men. It is to put yourselves in their place; try to see through their eyes; do justice to what is good in their faith or methods, that they, seeing that you

are candid and just to their opinions, may be candid and just to yours. There is not the least insincerity here, but it is the simple wish to know and accept all truths from all sides, in order to get all the good and do all the good you can.

5. Another piece of practical wisdom is the advice he gives to his new converts to be content with their condition, whatever it is. If you are a Jew when you are converted, remain one; if a Gentile, remain one. If you are a slave, try to bear your condition as a slave patiently, though, if freedom is attainable, secure it. If you are married to a heathen man or woman, do not leave your husband or wife, but try to show them how faithful and true and loving Christianity makes you. Do not say, "We are incompatible, we must separate." Love will "bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, endure all things." The root of all peace and content is within; no change of outward circumstances will help you. Do not put your mind on these outward trials. Do not worry about them.

Filled with the strong desire for a spirit of brotherhood in the church, Paul shows them how dependent they are on each other; how every one needs the rest; that no man is so good, wise, great, free as to be able to stand alone. He teaches, by the similitude of "many members and one body," that while they differ in tastes, faculty, power, there is a common life to all. If one suffer, all will suffer; if one is happy, all are happier. He opposes thus

the tendency to individualism, which is the danger attending all progress and development. Variety is necessary and good; separation and isolation are bad. Each man has his own gift, but he ought to use it for the good of all. You may think yourselves strong, able to go alone, needing no help. But let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. We are all open to temptation, at every stage of our progress. I, Paul, am myself sensible of my danger. I do not feel safe. I am obliged to keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself might become a castaway.

6. Equally wise is his advice to those at the other extreme, whose danger was not from too much speculation, but from caring too little about reason. The mystics in the church rejoiced in the mysterious gift of tongues. It seems that, in the fervor of that religious movement, some of those strange phenomena occurred which have been reproduced at every period of Christian history. In the great religious revivals which occurred early in this century, in Kentucky and Tennessee, extraordinary nervous affections took place. Men fell down in trances, and lay for days as if dead. Others were seized with violent convulsions, and spoke in strange languages. All this was believed to be the direct work of the Holy Ghost.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dean Stanley (Commentary on the Epistles to the Corinthians) refers to an account given by Tertullian of a sister in the church who had received revelations; to the paroxysms which attended the preaching of Wesley; to the strange conditions of ecstasy in the "Prophets of Cevennes;" and especially to the gift of tongues

The phenomena in Corinth, called speaking with tongues, seem something of this sort. Men went into a high state of religious ecstasy, and uttered wonderful and often unintelligible words. Paul does not deny that this is a genuine result of a high religious enthusiasm, and when used rationally is good. But, so far as it is irrational and unintelligible, he thinks it of no value. Every manifestation of spiritual life is "to profit withal;" is for use. A man who utters plain advice, who gives comfort and instruction, is greater than he who speaks in this mysterious language. All things should be made intelligible, and become orderly. "Even if you play on a wooden pipe, you must have some clear distinction and

among the followers of Irving. The persons affected among the Irvingites spoke in a very rich and melodious tone of voice, uttering strange words with an astonishing sweetness and power of expression; sometimes with very great rapidity, but with perfect distinctness. The voice became so powerful as to be heard to a great distance, and yet the speaker was tranquil and composed in mind and body. One witness describes the overpowering effect on the minds of the hearers of the commanding utterance and intense force of expression in the speakers. He says he was himself seized upon by this power while listening to others, and though struggling against it, was compelled by some irresistible influence to cry out and confess his sins. Afterward, when sitting at home, he was moved by a great impulse to speak, and he uttered sentences in languages he did not himself understand, but which his wife told him were Spanish and Italian. Sometimes he had words and sentences given him to speak in French and Latin, which languages he understood.

All these curious phenomena show that under great spiritual excitement the mind will act automatically and bring up, perhaps from the memory, words which the speaker himself does not understand.

method, or who cares for it? Unless you make yourselves understood, you are speaking into the air. I, Paul, can speak with tongues, and more than any of you; but I had rather say five words with my understanding, so as to do some good to others, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also. I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. Brethren, be not children in understanding. Be children in malice, but be men in understanding. The true prophet is not the man who talks wildly and at random, but he who controls and directs his speech, that all things may be done decently, peacefully and in order."

There seems to have been great freedom of discussion and debate in this Church of Corinth. Apparently they often became much excited, and two or three would speak at once. It also happened there, as elsewhere, that a few good speakers would monopolize the meeting, and wish to do all the talking. Men were as fond of hearing themselves speak then as they are now. Paul therefore advised, first, that only one should speak at a time, and secondly, that every one should have a chance. "If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. Let all teach, one by one, that all may learn, and all be comforted."

Then he adds: "Let the spiritualists among you, who claim to be inspired by truth, follow this advice, and speak in order to do good (xiv. 37). If any are ignorant of these higher experiences, allow them to be



ignorant. Do not trouble them (ver. 38). On the one hand, let the spiritualists aim to teach; and on the other, let not the anti-spiritualists forbid the speaking with tongues. But let everything be done with system and method, and in an orderly way (ver. 40).

The passage (xiv. 34) in which Paul forbids women to speak, is a proof that the Gospel had already given women great freedom. It found these women, according to Greek customs (see Potter's Greek Antiquities), shut up in entire seclusion, and not allowed to take part in any public meeting. It brought them at once into the church, and placed them on such a basis of equality with men that they began to preach, and to discuss all questions. Their previous ignorance of public life was probably a source of disorder. Therefore Paul told them not to speak in the church; though from chapter xi. 5 it would seem that they were allowed to pray and prophesy, provided they wore a veil.

In the First Epistle to the Corinthians there is more inequality in the Pauline thought than in any other of his writings. The tone rises and falls, going from the lofty inspiration of the Hymn to Love (chapter 13), and the solemn prophetic insight of the chapter on the resurrection, to passages in which not only the inspiration disappears, but even the usual common-sense of the Apostle is at fault. Most of these cases are those in which he falls back on some Rabbinical analogy, like those of the Talmud and Philo. Take the following instances:—



1 Cor. x. 1-4. Paul here draws a parallel between Jews and Christians in respect to their privileges. The baptism of the Israelites was their going through the Red Sea, and being under the overshadowing cloud. The miraculous manna, and water from Horeb, was their Lord's Supper. The Rock which attended them was their Christ. The Rabbinical tradition asserted that a well of water was formed inside of a rock, and rolled along with the camp for forty years; and that the water burst from it every day, when the Elders said, Spring up, O well! (See Stanley, *ad locum*.) This rock, Paul says, was their Christ, or Messiah. Paul does not mean to say that Jesus was the rock, but that just as Jesus is our Christ, the rock was their Christ. This, which seems puerile to us, was to Paul part of his inherited instruction; a style of argument which he had not wholly outgrown. It belonged to the lower level of his mind.

A similar falling from inspiration into memory is the argument in Galatians (4. 22), that Abraham's wife Sarah means Jerusalem, and his other wife, Hagar, means Mount Sinai; that Sinai, again, stands for the Law of Moses, which is a law of slavery, and that Jerusalem from above is the Gospel, which is free. Of this argument Luther said, "*Der Beweis sey zu schwach zum stich*,"—"This proof is too weak to hold;" which Tholuck says (*Bergpredigt*) would have been too bold a word for the seventeenth century, but certainly ought not to be too bold for the nineteenth.

Again (1 Cor. vii.), in his position concerning marriage, Paul takes a low and purely negative view, by no means worthy of the Christian idea. His points are,—

1. Celibacy is, on the whole, a beautiful thing, and desirable if one has a gift for it, but not otherwise (ver. 1, 7, 8, 32, 33).

2. Marriage is good as a remedy, and to prevent vicious desires,—permissible but not commanded (ver. 2. 9).

3. Ascetic self-denial is not desirable or right (ver. 3–5).

4. Divorce is not allowable, but is forbidden by Christ (ver. 10) to both parties (11). Those who separate ought not to marry again.

5. Separation is sometimes allowable (11, 15), but to be avoided as far as possible. Incompatibility of belief or sentiment is no adequate ground for separation.

This view of marriage is certainly lower than that of Jesus, who made it a divine institution, appointed by God by his creative act, laying its foundation in mutual adaptations of mind, heart and character. This ideal view of marriage, implying a merging of separate personalities into one, is far higher than that which Paul gives here. But for that very reason his tone is in this place peculiarly undecided, as though he felt he did not see all the truth on this subject. He conscientiously distinguishes the sources of his judgment in each case. Some things he permits, others he commands (ver. 6). Some things he says

on the authority of Jesus (ver. 10), some on his own (ver. 12). As to some matters he only expresses an opinion (ver. 25). And, finally, in regard to other things, he believes, but is not sure, that he has the Spirit of God (vii. 40).

Again (1 Cor. xi.), when Paul discusses the equality and subordination of women, he uses arguments of very unequal value, and seems sometimes inconsistent with himself.

He had said (Gal. iii. 28) that in Christ there was no distinction of sex, but that all were one in him. Alarmed by the evils in Corinth proceeding from the emancipation of women, he tells them that man is the head of the woman (xi. 3); that woman is the glory of the man, as the man is the glory of God (ver. 7); that the woman was created for the man, not the man for the woman (ver. 9). All this seems certainly inconsistent with the statement in Galatians. Then what he says about the veil is below his usual solidity of argument. No doubt he was right in wishing Christian women to do, not merely what was lawful, but also what was expedient; and not needlessly to violate the customs of their time and place.<sup>1</sup> But instead of using this argument

<sup>1</sup> It was the custom of the Jews and Romans to cover the head with a veil during sacrifice. See Virgil, *Æneid*, iii. 407. In the East, to wear a veil was the distinction between modest and immodest women. In the Hindu play, "The Toy-Cart," written some hundred years before Christ, the courtesan Vasantaséná has a veil, to show that she has returned to the ranks of modest women. See Wilson's "Hindu Theatre."

from expediency, which would have been here very appropriate, Paul argues that the woman should wear the veil, because she was created for the man; because nature in giving her long hair showed that her head should be covered; and because the angels who might be present would either be displeased or too much pleased to see her without it. If the women were as acute then as they are now, they perhaps answered that if their long hair was given them for a covering, as Paul said (ver. 15), they did not need any other; and if their hair was given them as a covering, they ought not to cover it with a veil. In fact, our Apostle does not seem very sure of his ground, for he closes his argument (ver. 16) by saying that if any one wishes to argue the point for the sake of victory, he will decline to contend, for neither he nor the churches have any fixed rule about the matter.

In the discussion which follows concerning the Lord's Supper, we have a glimpse into the peculiar composition of this church at Corinth, and the habits of the early church in regard to the Communion. It was a cheerful feast, a supper where gayety prevailed, a social and festive gathering. At Corinth this festival was sometimes carried into an orgy, where some would be intoxicated,<sup>1</sup> while others would not have enough to appease their hunger. For as, in

<sup>1</sup> The Greek word *μεθύει* used here (ver. 21) commonly means intoxicated, and the word is derived from the heathen habit of drinking a great deal of wine *after their sacrifices* (*μετὰ τὸ θύειν*, "after the sacrifice"). This heathen custom explains why he said that the Lord's table was not like the table of demons (x. 21).

Palestine and elsewhere, the Christian church, *as to its form*, was a continuation of the Jewish Synagogue; so in Corinth, the Christian community adopted the methods of the Greek Clubs. In these the practice was for each guest to eat that which he brought with him in his own basket (Athenæus, viii. 17). Socrates<sup>1</sup> recommended that, to avoid disorder, they should not begin to eat until the contents of each basket was placed on the table. To correct the abuses arising out of the false distinctions and selfish divisions among the Christians, Paul calls their attention to the idea of the Lord's Supper. It was a feast of communion with Christ, in his suffering and his strength (x. 16). Its purpose was to unite them into one body (x. 17). It was to show the Lord's death till he should come, — a perpetual reminder of his devoted love and sacrifice (xi. 26). To eat and drink unworthily, in a selfish and exclusive spirit, was not to partake in the spirit of Jesus, but in that of the Jews who killed him (xi. 27). And he who eats and drinks in this unworthy way, merely for self-indulgence, condemns himself by this action, showing how far he is from the spirit of Jesus.<sup>2</sup>

In all these details, there appears one motive, one purpose and aim. That purpose and aim is the good of all; that motive is love to all. If the real purpose

<sup>1</sup> Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, — quoted by Stanley.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps no more unfortunate mistranslation is to be found in the common version than where the word "damnation" is used in 1 Cor. xi. 29.



is to do good, a man will try the best methods, and not be satisfied till he has done the work. Nothing is so practical as love. It never runs uncertainly, but always keeps in sight the end. It runs in order to obtain. Love develops the understanding, leads to insight, cultivates intelligible utterance, wishes to make itself understood, is willing to bear wrong rather than cause harm to others; does not quarrel with its surroundings and circumstances; is able to sympathize with those differing from one's self; puts itself in the place of others, in order to understand them. Love thus becomes all things to all men, will often sacrifice its rights, not insist on having everything which belongs to it, and it knows how to discriminate between the essential and unessential.

It is often thought that worldly and selfish men are the most practical, and that generous people are not practical. Selfishness is practical so far as this, that it has one aim, namely, its own good; and that it uses all means to reach it. But it is unpractical in this, that the good it seeks is so poor and low that after it has obtained it, it remains unsatisfied. Generosity may often seem at first visionary and unsuccessful, but in the long run it wins the highest prize.

Probably many of Paul's companions in Jerusalem thought him unwise to relinquish his promising position among the Pharisees, to join the humble sect which followed Jesus. He had the prospect of ultimately becoming High Priest; or, at any rate, a distinguished Rabbi. His words might then have



been recorded in the Talmud. But he chose to be one of the persecuted, instead of a persecutor. He became an outcast from his people, hated and despised ; he was beaten, he was poor, he was imprisoned, he encountered many hardships and labors. But he was no visionary. He had a distinct aim, and he pursued it steadily by the wisest means. He won success ; he planted Christianity in Europe ; he made of it a religion for mankind. His writings are not in the Talmud, but they are in the New Testament. He did not become a Jewish Rabbi, but he is the great Apostle of Jesus Christ. He fought a good fight, he finished his course, he kept the faith. His sufferings are long since ended ; his joy and triumph will have no end. Was he not a practical man ? Was not this the best example of good sense ? The highest wisdom is to choose that which is generous as an end, and to pursue it by the best means, prudently, faithfully, and without being weary of well-doing.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THEOLOGY OF PAUL.

I SHALL now speak of Paul's theology; meaning by this, theology proper, or the doctrine concerning the Deity.

1. Paul's view of the Divine presence in Nature and the Soul.

Paul nowhere undertakes *to prove* the existence of the Deity. To him religion rests, not upon a belief in the Divine existence, founded on argument and evidence, but on a knowledge of God seen in nature, or seen in the soul. This knowledge of God is clear in proportion as man is spiritual; obscure and faint in proportion as man is sinful. He, therefore, merely states the way in which men know, or may know, God; not the proofs, on the strength of which they may believe in his existence. This way of knowing God is described as twofold: first, by seeing him in outward nature; second, by seeing him in the soul itself.

(Acts xiv. 15.) At Lystra, where the people were about to worship Paul and Barnabas, taking them

to be Jupiter and Mercury, Paul tells them : " We are your fellow-mortals, and preach to you to turn from these vanities [or emptinesses, or nothings], to serve the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all the things that are therein. Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness, in that he did good and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

Here he speaks of God showing himself to all men outwardly in nature and the course of providence.

(Acts xvii. 23-29.) In Paul's address to the people of Athens, he speaks of God as making the world and all things in it, and giving to all creatures life and breath and all things ; and as if, through these manifestations, they might feel after and find him.

(Romans i. 19-20.) Paul declares that the eternal power and divine attributes of God are clearly seen in the works of creation, and that God has thus manifested to the Gentiles all that may be known of himself.

In the passage last quoted there is also a reference to the inward revelation of God, where he says : " That which may be known of God is manifest within them ;" and a like allusion may be found in the address to the Athenians, where, after speaking of God as the author of the whole outward universe, and to be discovered therein by those who search for him, he adds that he is not far from any one of us ;

for that our inward life and being is itself rooted in God.

Thus far, Paul speaks of the knowledge which all men can have of the being, power and attributes of God, as seen in nature or in their own souls. But he also speaks of a much more clear and intimate knowledge of God, which belongs to the Christian and to the spiritually-minded man. He says to the Corinthians (1 Cor. ii. 10), that as man's spirit is conscious of man's thoughts and purposes, so is God's spirit conscious of God's thoughts and purposes; and that this Divine Spirit dwelling in man, makes man also conscious of God's will and character. The natural man, he adds (that is, the unspiritual man), whose aims are merely temporal and worldly, cannot receive the things of God's spirit, for they seem foolish to him; and he cannot know them, because they must be known spiritually. This view is constant throughout Paul's epistles. He everywhere asserts that the Spirit in the heart gives us an intimate feeling of God's presence and love. And so Jesus tells us that the pure in heart shall see God; and the apostle John says that the Light which lightens every man who comes into the world shines in darkness, and is not comprehended or understood where the mind is obscured by sin.

Paul, therefore, was not guilty of the folly of trying to prove the existence of God. First, because the people to whom he preached believed it already, and secondly, because, if they did not, they could not be

made to believe it by an argument, but only by looking for God around them and within them. He was preaching to Jews who believed in one God; to Jewish proselytes who had the same belief; and to Gentiles who, though they believed in many gods, had always a more or less distinct idea of one Supreme Being.

## 2. Paul's idea of God.

All opinions concerning the Deity fall into two classes, which are atheism and theism. Theists, again, are divided into three classes, — polytheists, monotheists, and pantheists. Polytheism and pantheism are the two opposite extremes of theism. Polytheists, such as the Greeks, believed in an immense number of deities, — in a sort of democratic Pantheon, which contained some thirty thousand gods. Polytheism is not necessarily idolatry; for we can conceive of a man's worshipping a hundred gods, and yet worshipping them as spirits without any visible form. But polytheism tends continually to idolatry; for, except this multitude of gods appear in some visible body, they can hardly be kept distinct in the mind; and so, as a matter of fact, polytheism, in separating and dividing God into a thousand different beings, has always ended in idolatry. The opposite extreme is pantheism; which, instead of dividing the essence of God into a multitude of spirits, confounds together God and the World. Between these two was the monotheism of the Jews; in which God was above the world, distinct from it, and governing it.

Now Paul was a monotheist, believing in one God who was not only supreme, but alone.

(1 Corinthians, viii. 6.) Paul speaking of idols says:—"We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and there is none other God but one; for though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there are many gods and many lords, but to us there is but one God,—the Father, from whom are all things and we to [or into] him." The Christian monotheism, as taught by Paul, differed from the Jewish monotheism in this respect,—that it did not separate God from the world or from man, as did the other. The Jewish monotheism taught that God was above the world; pantheism, that God was the world; and polytheism, that by the agency of the gods all events occurred. But Paul declares that God is above all, and through all, and in us all (Eph. iv. 6); thus combining in one grand view the essential truths of these three systems. Pantheism asserts that God is the only substance,—the substance of matter and of spirit; and that there is nothing out of him but unsubstantial form. Polytheism teaches that the motives and guiding forces of the world are each a separate deity,—that there is a god in every tree to make it grow, in every brook to make it run, in every disease and in every process of cure. But the doctrine of Paul is, that in God we live, and move, and have our being. It is *our* life, *our* being, *our* motion; but sustained by God, dependent on him, and holding



itself by his being, as the tree holds to the solid earth by its roots. He assumes that we and all other things come from God, from his creative intelligence; that we act and exist through God, through his sustaining power; and that we tend to God, to be received into the boundless ocean of his love and joy, so that God may be all in all (1 Cor. xv. 28). This last expression, however, we must observe, does not imply pantheistic absorption, but conscious union of individual souls with the supreme Spirit. Paul does not say that God may be all (which would be pantheism), but that God may be *all in all*; which, while it implies a perfect union and communion of God with his creatures, preserves the individual existence of the latter. Thus Paul finds God everywhere, — immanent in the universe, not far from the human soul, constantly creating all things anew; and yet he never confounds the Deity with the world or with his creatures. So nature becomes divine and filled with God. Thus the soul of man becomes a temple in which God dwells. If we look in, and contemplate our own mind, we find God there. If we look out, and regard the face of nature, we find God there. If we look up, we find God above all, as a Ruler. If we consider the inward substance of things, we find God beneath all, as a Sustainer. If we look back we see all things flowing, from the first, from the designing intelligence of the Creator. If we look forward, we find all things flowing toward God; to his love, to his joy, as the end and Receiver of all.

But Paul's idea of the Deity was especially of the Living God. He did not regard him as abstract power or intelligence, — not as the mere order or law of the universe; but as actively and lovingly present with all his creatures, to help, to comfort, to strengthen, to warn, to rebuke and punish, chasten and heal. He is present as the witness of human conduct; pleased with every right act and purpose, displeased with every wrong one. The expression "living God" is used some twelve times in the Epistles and Book of Acts, and the Pauline Epistle to the Hebrews. This makes the chief distinction between the God of religion and the God of metaphysics. The God of metaphysics, the logical Deity, has every divine attribute, except those of life and freedom; but of these he has less than even man himself. He must neither feel pleasure nor pain; he must not be pleased with good nor displeased with evil. He cannot enjoy the beauty of his own universe; and even his love is a mere abstract benevolence, directed to general ends, and bound fast by inflexible laws. This logical deity can do nothing but maintain the order of the universe. No new creative acts are allowed to flow from his infinite fulness; no new movements to commence with his overflowing love. He must not come to his creatures before they call for him. He must not give them anything because they ask it. He must not send his love into their heart or his thoughts into their mind to create a new life. All this man can do

for his friend, and the earthly father for his child ; but not the heavenly Father. Man can forgive, but the God of logic must be only just, not merciful ; and must strictly enforce the iron mechanism of most fatal law. Man may love and serve individual souls, but the God of metaphysics must love only whole races, and things in general.<sup>1</sup>

Not such is the living God of Paul ; not such the God and Father of Jesus Christ. He not only cares for the world, but for every separate soul. His joy is increased by our goodness ; his heaven grows darker through our shame. Nothing is too insignificant to be noticed by him, — not the hairs of our head, nor the falling sparrows. His holiness separates him from our sin ; his mercy draws us away from it. Nearer than the nearest, he inspires the prayer which he

<sup>1</sup> This modern view of the Deity, which is so strongly opposed to the "personality" of God, is singularly unphilosophical. All we know of personality is in ourselves. Personality in man is the highest power in the universe with which we are acquainted. The human ego, which unites knowledge, affection and will, and thus knows how to do what it desires, and can concentrate its faculties on a fixed end, is the power which gives man the ascendancy over nature. But any definition of Deity which denies to him the highest element of which we have any knowledge involves a contradiction in terms. The personal unity of the Deity may and must be vastly superior to that of man, but it cannot be inferior. God must be *more* personal than we are, not less. In personality also is the only perfect unity we know. For we can conceive of everything else as divided into parts ; but the ego cannot be imagined as divisible into upper and lower, inner and outer. Without personality, "A power, not ourselves, which works for righteousness" is an equally faulty definition ; for righteousness is inconceivable apart from personality. The forces of nature may work for the good of man, but cannot distinguish in favor of righteousness.

hears and answers. He gives the thought which leads us to himself.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. The Divine Decrees.

Of the doctrine of Divine Decrees I shall speak at length in chapter xv., and therefore will here treat of it only as it bears on the moral relation which God sustains toward his creatures. Because Paul regarded the Deity as a "living God," and not merely as a supreme order, he must ascribe to him a constant agency and causal activity in human development, — and especially in the steps of religious experience. We will therefore examine here at more length than in chapter xv. this creative influence of God in the human life, which is particularly described in Romans viii. 28-30. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose; for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Take as examples of this faith in the benign providence of God toward individuals, such passages as 2 Cor. i. 3-4; iv. 6; v. 20; Rom. viii. 39; Ephesians i. *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> A better translation would be, "Whom he has foreknown, he also has predestinated; whom he has predestinated, he has called; whom he has called, he has justified; whom he has justified, he has glorified." We should then not be thinking of God's past activity only, or of God in the past; but of a present God, who has done all this for us.

Paul here gives the steps of man's redemption and human development from the side of God's activity; showing how much God does for each of us, all the way through. He says nothing here of those who fail, for his object is to describe the process in those who succeed. He says nothing here of what man does himself, for his object is to describe what God does for him. What then are these steps of man's salvation?

1. God's foreknowledge. Not his foreknowledge of our goodness, but simply his previous knowledge of our special nature and individual capacity, which he gave us in its germ,—his creative knowledge of every man's separate possibility.

2. God's predestination or arrangement of our destiny, of our outward circumstances, opportunities, influences, determined especially for each one of us in the divine order, so that each man is born just when and where he ought to be, and surrounded by just such circumstances as he ought to have, and receives just such influences as he needs to bring out that which God intends should be brought out then and there.

3. God's call or invitation; that is, his sending us the knowledge of himself, of his law, and of the Gospel of Christ, which comes to each man according to the divine order.

4. Justification, pardon, forgiveness of sin, the sense of God's love in the heart, a deep and permanent conviction that God is the Father of our souls, our best Friend, who will keep us safe in time and eternity.



5. Glory, or full redemption from all evil, full successful activity for all good, happy obedience, the deep peace of full action, the rest of unhindered, living, joyful labor.

Now, each of these five movements of the spiritual life is wholly from God. He gave to each one of us his special mental and moral organization. We did not procure it for ourselves. He surrounded us each with these particular circumstances. We did not choose for ourselves in what century or in what country to be born. He sends us our knowledge of truth. We cannot call on him of whom we have not heard. We cannot ask for knowledge of whose existence we are ignorant. Every truth which comes to awaken our soul comes from God. And so, too, his pardoning love is not obtained by any efforts of ours. It is given on the condition that we should wish to have it, and believe in it; and if we are able to believe in it, that, also, is because God has sent Christ to convince us of its reality. And so, finally, though we must work out our salvation, we could not accomplish that but by the constant helps and influences which God sends to us, and which he is always ready to send to all who look for them.

All this is told, not in order to discourage, but in order to encourage. If a man is called upon to make a voyage round the world, it is no discouragement to tell him that the whole voyage has been planned and arranged beforehand, the vessel provided, the crew engaged, proper officers and charts secured,



his passage taken and paid for, and his state-room furnished. If a man is called upon to build a railroad a thousand miles long, it is no discouragement to be told that a charter has been obtained, stock subscribed, the surveys made, and all his fellow-engineers and laborers obtained. And in like manner, it is no discouragement to us, when called upon to be perfect as God is perfect, to love him with all our heart and our neighbor as ourselves, and to labor for the redemption of the whole world from sin and evil, to be told that God has arranged everything beforehand for this purpose, and determined the whole order, and provided help for every step of the way. And if any one chooses to argue that because God has done all this, man has nothing to do, — that because all things work together for good to them that love God, we are not to work with all things, — he will reason illogically.

But there is another side to this subject. There are those who are *not* elected, nor called. There are those who seem to be excluded by inevitable circumstances, inevitable ignorance, from every opportunity of knowledge and of goodness; and here, it may be said, lies the real difficulty. Still we may remark that the difficulty, as regards Paul's doctrine, is only the same difficulty which lies in the facts themselves. The largest part of the human race are, as a matter of fact, excluded from any good opportunity, not only of becoming Christians, but of becoming thoroughly virtuous and happy men. It is not a man's own fault that he is born in Africa, New Holland, or New Zea-

land ; and if he is so born he must, of necessity, be in some respects an ignorant and depraved man. It is no merit of ours that we are, every one of us, less savage, less sensual, more conscientious than he ; it is simply the election of God which put *us* here, and put *him* there. This election was irrespective of our worth or his. It was wholly arbitrary, as far as any merit is concerned. But what is this election ? Evidently, to privileges and opportunities ; and there comes a day of judgment, in which we are to answer for the use made of them. God makes of the same lump — that is, of those equally good, one no better than the other — of the same lump, one vessel for higher and nobler uses, another for more ignoble ones. No one has a right to complain of this, for the object of this order and gradation is the good of the whole, and therefore the good of each. For a time, one may seem to be sacrificed to another ; but in the long run each will find sufficient opportunities and a suitable place. He who is faithful in a few things will be made ruler over many things ; and each one will be judged according to his opportunities and his fidelity.<sup>1</sup>

This view of the living presence of God in all events and transactions produces, on the one hand, patience and submission, and, on the other, the energy of hope and confidence. It is no doctrine of Necessity nor of Fate. It does not lead us to acquiesce in the evils of the world as inevitable, nor with our own sins as compelled by a dark destiny. It is a view eminently

<sup>1</sup> See the further discussion of this point in chapter xv.

adapted to inspire courage, and to sustain our faith in the darkest hour, — assuring us that neither height nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

#### 4. The Divine Manifestations.

We have seen that Paul's view of God varied somewhat from the Jewish monotheism; and that he accepted the truths which had been mixed with the errors of pantheism and polytheism. He saw that God revealed himself continually in the face of nature, and that the Divine life was flowing evermore through all things. But God reveals himself, not only in nature and providence, but also in Christ and in the Spirit. This triple manifestation of God is the original truth which was afterwards worked out by degrees into the doctrine of the Trinity. The error of that doctrine arises from changing a living, practical truth into a dead formula, unintelligible and self-contradictory. This dead doctrine of the Trinity has been placed in a splendid mausoleum and worshipped in the place of the living God. The worst is, that it too often hides from the eyes both of its advocates and its opponents the real truth which lies behind. What is this truth?

According to Paul, there is but one God, the Father. This he states over and over again. For example:

1 Corinthians viii. 6: "To us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy ii. 5: "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men—the man Christ Jesus."

The inferiority or subordination of Christ, and consequently the sole Deity of the Father, appears most strikingly from those very passages in which the highest rank is ascribed to Jesus; as in Col. i. 15–19, where Christ is called "the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature;" where it is said that "all things were created by him and for him;" that he "is before all things," and that all things "are established in him;" for even here it is added that this was owing to the pleasure of the Father; and it is apparent that here, even, where the highest position is ascribed to him, he is still but the image of God, and the first, or chief, of the creatures of God. So too, 1 Cor. xv. 24–28. In this passage it is said that Christ will overcome all enemies, and conquer every principle which opposes him; but then it is added that this he does, not by his own power, but by the power of God who puts all things under him; and that then the Son also himself shall be subject to him that did put all things under him, that God may be all in all. Here Christ in his highest capacity, as the Son, is expressly made subordinate to God.

But while Paul teaches that there is but one God, he also teaches that there are different and distinct manifestations or revelations of this one God.

We have seen that according to Paul, God manifests himself in nature and history; that he is the

substance in which all other beings, and all other things are rooted: that he is the source whence all living creatures draw their life; that he is the end toward which all move. Nature, then, is not dead, but living. It is alive with God. It manifests him from age to age. The heavens declare his glory in their sublime revolutions. Day speaks to day in its infinite multitude of phenomena, full of the wisest adaptations. Here, then, is one manifestation of God.

But again, he manifests himself in Christ; who, according to Paul, is "the image of the invisible God" (Col. i. 15); or more clearly in the Epistle to the Hebrews (which, though not Paul's, is yet Pauline), "who is the brightness of his glory, and express image of his person." The personality of God appears in Christ. In nature we see abstract wisdom, power, and goodness,—a Deity who is a system of laws. In Christ we see personal wisdom and goodness,—a Deity who is love to the individual; one who can be loved as a friend and a father; one who can forgive the violation of law; one who can answer prayer; one who can approach the soul inwardly as well as from without; one who can not only maintain the ancient order of things, but can commence a new order. Now this is a wholly distinct manifestation of God. It is not the same view which we have of God in nature, but another. It may be summed up in this word,—that in the Son we see the Father; which exactly corresponds to what Jesus says of himself.



But yet there is a third form of Divine manifestation which is distinguished as the Holy Spirit. It is a revelation of God in the depths of the soul,—a revelation by which alone we know him as Spirit. In outward nature we see God manifested as law; in Christ we see him manifested as personal love; in the soul itself we see him manifested as Spirit. All the ideas clustered under that word, as Infinity, Eternity, perfect Holiness, absolute Being, absolute Causation, come to us from within, and are written on the soul by the finger of God. We do not get them by any process of effort or reflection. They are given us in the texture of the mind itself. And by means of these we are capable of receiving those other divine influences by which God creates in the heart love, penitence, holy resolve, and a new power of life.

Here is no trinity, but yet a triplicity, or three-fold manifestation. We find it indicated in several places: Thus, Eph. ii. 18,—“Through him [that is, Christ] we both [that is, Jew and Gentile] have an access by one Spirit unto the Father.” And again (ver. 20–22), the church is compared to a building, of which Christ is the corner-stone, and which is a habitation for God, through the Spirit. So in the apostolic benediction (2 Cor. xiii. 14),—“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all.” So far from Deity being ascribed to Christ here, he is distinguished altogether from God; and we can only argue, from the three being named together, that



there is some relation existing between them, but not what it is.

We therefore sum up Paul's views of God thus: He did not believe that the existence of God is to be proved logically, but rather that it is to be known experimentally. He believed that any earnest man could know something of God, could find some traces of his presence and adequate assurance of his Godhead, in the world without and the world within. He believed God not transiently but permanently present in both; informing both the outward universe and the inward soul. He differs in his idea of God from atheists in thus perceiving the presence of God in all things. He differs from polytheists in believing that God is one and alone, and that there is none other but he. He differs from pantheists in believing that God is a person, capable of love, of creative intelligence, of free activity; and that the world and mankind are distinct existences, though dependent existences. He differs from the monotheism of the Jews in believing that God is not only above all things as King, but also through all things as a presence, and in us all as a constant spiritual friend. He differs from modern philosophers and scientific Deists by believing in God as a living God, free, and not bound by his own laws, capable of affection and an active interest in all that befalls his creatures. And finally, he differs from church creeds and church orthodoxy in this, that he nowhere teaches any doctrine of the Trinity, but always subordinates Christ to the

Father, and makes the Father supreme and only God. But he differs from Unitarians too, so far as Unitarians have merely reproduced the Jewish monotheism, and so far as they do not recognize these various manifestations of God in nature and the soul; which are the eternal facts, perverted into errors of orthodoxy on one side, and errors of pantheism on the other.

If we test these views of God in the mind of the Apostle by our principle of inspiration, we shall find that they all belong to the living and growing part of his mind, and come out of the central Christ-Idea. They are not forced up mechanically from his memory, but are evolved naturally out of his fundamental insights. Once conceiving of Christ as the image of the unseen God, and as a manifestation of the infinite tenderness of the Father toward his creatures, all the rest follows. God is not outside of the world, but within it. He is revealed in the order and adaptation of nature, and in the divine elements of the human soul. He is in intimate communion with his children, ready to aid and sympathize with them in all things. All may possess this heavenly friendship. He is the Providence too, which prepares all the movements of time and events of individual life, from the foundation of the world. The great conception of a Being from whom are all things, through whom are all things, and to whom are all things, is the necessary outcome of the conception of the Ideal Christ.

## CHAPTER XII.

### PAUL'S IDEAS CONCERNING CHRIST.

THE subject of this chapter is the Idea of Christ, as it lay in the mind of Paul.

Every careful reader of the New Testament must have been struck with the original view of Christ, and peculiar quality of faith in Christ, which is unfolded in the Pauline epistles. The Christ of history, as represented in the four gospels, scarcely appears therein. There is nothing in these epistles concerning the birth of Jesus; nothing about his preaching in Galilee; nothing about his parables or miracles; and, except as regards his death and resurrection, the gospel events might never have taken place, and Paul's writings would remain the same. Of the earthly Jesus he has almost nothing to say, except that he was crucified and rose from the dead. He does not mention the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord's Prayer, the parable of the Prodigal Son or the Good Samaritan, the raising of Lazarus from the dead. These facts, stories and teachings from the life of Jesus probably made up the substance of the

preaching of the twelve apostles. But it is evident that Paul's preaching as a missionary was something quite different. He mentions, incidentally, the institution of the Lord's Supper by Jesus, and adds one sentence from those divine lips which the four Evangelists had failed to record, "Remember the words which the Lord Jesus said, that 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" But this is nearly all. Of the historic Christ Paul tells us nothing. One reason is that he had no personal knowledge of Jesus while on earth. But, referring to this fact, Paul says that "if he had known Christ according to the flesh, yet now he would know him no more." He would not care to remember the earthly Christ, he was in such intimate communion with the risen and heavenly Christ.

It may seem strange, perhaps, if I add that Paul has as little to teach concerning the Christ of dogma as about the Christ of history. Still, this is true. Dogmas and creeds concerning Christ have been built up on texts taken from Paul's writings. But Paul himself nowhere lays down any system of doctrine in regard to the person of Christ, his place in the Trinity, his divine and human natures, and all else that theologians have since so much discussed under the head of Christology. Except in one or two extremely doubtful passages, Paul says nothing from which it can be inferred that he believed Christ to be God. He tells us that Jesus was "the image of the invisible God;" that he was "the first-born"—

that is, the highest and noblest—"of every creature," or rather of the whole creation. Jesus was "declared to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead." He is made to be "our wisdom, righteousness, justification, and redemption." We have the "gift of eternal life through him." He has been made "Lord of the dead and the living." "All things are put under his feet." We see "the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." In such passages Paul celebrates the grandeur of Christ. But all this glory is something *given* to Jesus by his Father. It is God who puts all things under his feet. If Paul calls him "the image of the invisible God," it shows that he does not consider him that being of whom he is the image. If he calls him the "first-born of every creature," or the whole creation, it is evident that he regards him as a part of the creation, not as the Creator. When he teaches that "all things are to be put under the feet of Christ," as if by some inspired foresight of the future doctrine of the deity of Christ, and wishing to show beforehand its manifest error, he adds, "But *when* all things are put under him, it is manifest that He is excepted who did put all things under him; and when all things are put under him, then shall the Son<sup>1</sup> also himself be subject to him who did put all things under

<sup>1</sup> "The Son" cannot be understood of the human nature of Christ, as distinguished from his divine. "The Son" in the new Testament language always denotes Christ in his highest character.

him, that God may be all in all." But Paul has little interest in these speculations concerning the abstract nature of Christ. His interest was not in the Christ of dogma, but the living, acting Christ, ever present with his church, with his people, with every Christian heart and soul, to inspire, animate, bless and save.

It is unnecessary to add that Paul has nothing to teach concerning the Christ of ritual or ceremony, the church Christ, who can only be approached through sacraments, the Christ who is supposed to have established a new priesthood like that of Aaron, and who is to be offered again every day in sacrifice to God in the eucharist. All this system Paul declares to have been taken away. The death of Jesus is a sacrifice only in this sense, that it does, once for all, what the sacrifices of the law did only imperfectly. When he says that "Christ is our Passover, sacrificed for us," that "he is the holy lamb without blemish or spot," that we are "redeemed by his precious blood," he adds that we are crucified with him, and that so the world is crucified to us, and we to the world. We are to die, as Christ died, a death of self-surrender, self-denial, self-renunciation, else the cross of Christ is of none effect. The sacrifice of Christ, according to Paul, was not to appease or reconcile God; but it was to exercise a moral influence on man, — "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself." He does not say that Christ reconciled God to



the world. The object of his death was that we should not live henceforth to ourselves, but to him who died for us. All the sacrifices and ritual of the law are taken up and transfigured into a divine influence of love, giving us the sense of a pardoning God, and putting a new and generous spirit into our hearts. It is certain that Paul taught no sacramental Christ.

The whole idea and teaching of Paul concerning Jesus was derived from his own personal experience. It was a "Christ formed within, the hope of glory." He says, speaking of his conversion, "When it pleased God to reveal his son *in* me." "God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God." He prays for the Ephesian Christians "that Christ may dwell in their hearts by love." He tells the Colossians that "Christ is *in* them, the hope of glory;" and, again, that "their life is hid with Christ in God."

From such passages it is evident that Paul's fundamental conception of Jesus was of a living, ever-present master, friend, helper; one who is always spiritually near; who has not left the world, but is in it still, to carry on the great work of putting an end to all evil and sin, and that his presence is known by giving us peace, a sense

of pardon, a living faith, an active hope, a generous love, and enabling us to see in God our father and friend.

If we would sum it up in one word, we might say that Paul believed in Christ as a mighty power of spiritual life. Christ is, first, the life in every Christian soul; next, the life of the church; then, the life of the world. It is a life which is to increase till it conquers sin, abolishes the fear of death, and brings all mankind into a unity of peace and love.

Perhaps you will say, "A beautiful faith, but an illusion. Paul was mistaken. He was deceived by his own visions and hopes. He was deluded by his imagination, just as many enthusiasts have been before and since."

That is a possible explanation, no doubt; but let us examine it and see if it will bear the test of criticism.

If Paul's faith was an illusion, it must have begun at a time when he had no personal knowledge of Jesus, but believed him an impostor. We are to suppose, then, that this illusion came suddenly into his mind, without any outward or inward occasion; that this baseless illusion caused him to renounce at once his position, reputation, influence, and join the very body of people whom he had just before despised and persecuted. We must also suppose that the self-blinded enthusiast became, by means of this empty vision, the great missionary of the noblest

religion the world knows; that it gave him power to lead a life of immense labor, self-denial, suffering; that it brought triumphant success; that it enabled him to give Christianity to Europe; that it created in him profound insight, admirable eloquence, and all the best qualities of mind and heart. Is the cause sufficient for this effect? Do men gather grapes of thorns? Can a great religion be built on the sand? Which is the most improbable, that the world should have been made new by a madman's dream, or that Paul should really have had a revelation in his soul, showing him the risen Jesus, and teaching him the central, vital truths of the gospel? If every great effect must have a cause adequate to produce it, if only reality can create reality, if large movements among men cannot be accomplished by illusions, but only by the power of truth and fact, then we are compelled to believe that there was something real behind the vision of Paul. And we must be very deeply steeped in materialism if we cannot conceive it possible that a spirit like that of Christ may be able to communicate from the other side of the veil "which stoops, low-hung," between this life and the next.

When Paul makes the resurrection of Jesus the all-important fact in Christianity, he is not speaking of any physical return of the body from the grave, for of that he had no personal knowledge. The resurrection of Jesus was to him the knowledge of his risen master; communion and intercourse with

that risen master; his deriving strength, comfort, hope, from that risen master; being brought into the love of God by that heavenly influence. This was the fundamental conviction of Paul concerning Christ, that he was not a dead Christ, but a living ever-present and ever life-giving, or, as he called him, a risen master.

This ever-living master brings us also to God, and brings God to us. The Infinite Being, as we see him in nature, in its sublime laws, its vast order, its immensity and eternity, is adored and worshipped. But he becomes a personal friend when seen through the love and life of Jesus. So God comes very near to our hearts; God in Christ reconciles us to himself, helps us to pray, comforts us in sorrow, is a forgiving and merciful Father when we are conscious of sin. "God hath shined in our hearts, to give us a knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ." Thus Christ becomes the life of every soul.

Perhaps it may be said, "Is it not better to go directly to God than to go to him thus by a mediator?" I answer that it is the object of Christ to bring us to God, and to teach us to go directly to him. If, then, we are able to go directly to God, the work of Christ is done, and we are doing just what he wishes us to do. But if there are hours in which the heavens seem clouded, in which our sins darken the sky, in which we cannot find the eternal goodness, then we may perhaps be able to hear our human

brother, the Son of Man, who says, "Come to me, all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Peace I leave with you: my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you."

Is not this law of mediation universal? Do we not climb up by steps toward heaven? As Christ mediates God, so the apostles mediate Christ to our minds and hearts. Paul is a mediator by whom Christ comes to us. All the great teachers, prophets, poets, who have said and sung the eternal verities of heaven, are also mediators of divine truth. Every good man and woman, every wise father, every tender mother, mediates the divine holiness and the divine love. Jesus says to them all, "As the Father has sent me, so send I you." The divine mind, no doubt, reaches ours by some immediate influence. He descends directly into our souls by the great truths of being which he has made intuitions of every intellect. By these he lightens every man who comes into the world. We are all held directly to God by the instinctive ideas of the infinite, the eternal, absolute right, cause, freedom, beauty, love. By means of these we dwell in the bosom of the Father. But beside these intuitions there are innumerable mediating influences through which the Spirit of God reaches our hearts. According to Paul, Christ, who is at once Son of God and Son of Man, a human brother and a child of heaven, the image of the invisible God and the



highest of all creatures, is the chief channel through whom these blessed streams of life continually flow to every soul that has been led by faith in him.

And this has been the strength of the greatest heroes of faith, from Paul's time to ours. Such champions of truth as Augustine, Bernard, Savonarola, Luther, Wesley, have not only felt the immediate presence of God in their souls, but also that Christ, their heavenly brother, was in sympathy with their efforts. Nor does the broadest and freest rationalism exclude this loyalty to Jesus. Who felt it more than Channing, the modern prophet of freedom in religion? Especially in his two discourses on "Love to Christ," he shows that love has for its object goodness, not power; that it is drawn forth by the generosity of Jesus. "Others," he says, "may love Christ for mysterious attributes; I love him for the rectitude of his soul and life. I love him for that benevolence which went through Judea, instructing the ignorant, healing the sick, giving sight to the blind. I love him for the universal charity which comprehended the despised publican, the hated Samaritan, the benighted heathen. I love him for that gentle spirit which no insult could overpower; for that magnanimity with which he devoted himself to the work God gave him to do. I love him for his moral excellence. I know nothing else to love." And so, too, Theodore Parker, the great modern iconoclast, bowed in love before Jesus, and said to him:



"Yes, thou art still the life ; thou art the way  
 The holiest know ; light, life and way of heaven.  
 And they who dearest hope and deepest pray,  
 Toil by the truth, life, way that thou hast given."<sup>1</sup>

If it be that Jesus can still know our thoughts ; that he can be with us always, even to the end of the world ; that we can have him not only as a past teacher, but as a present friend, mediator, and helper, — then this is a great blessing ; and this requires no opinion about his rank, no belief concerning his nature, but only faith and gratitude, reliance and love.

But Paul not only believed Christ to be the life of every Christian soul, but also the life of the church. He constantly uses the comparison of the head and the body. As the brain directs and inspires the members, so Christ inspires the church. "Let us grow up," he says, "in all things into him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, maketh increase of the body unto the building of itself up in love." And again, "Holding the head, from which all the body, by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God."

Paul believed the spirit of Jesus held together the

<sup>1</sup> Those who are not acquainted with Unitarian writers would, I think, be somewhat surprised, and perhaps pleased, with the evidence given by many of them of a strong personal attachment to Jesus. Among these are such authors as William H. Furness, F. W. P. Greenwood, John Hamilton Thom, E. H. Sears, and Henry W. Bel-  
 lows. The same trait is to be found in many Unitarian hymns.

church, — gave it freedom, power, purity ; enabled it to go forward, and unfold into all things noble and useful. As Christ was and is the life of the soul, so he is the life of the church. The church is held together, not by any doctrine about Christ, but by his spirit. If his spirit dwells in it, making it generous, pure, peaceable, free, active, then it grows and becomes strong. Then it is a live church, it helps society, it sympathizes with all good things, helps every good enterprise, and makes the world better by its presence.

Thus, according to Paul, Christ is not only the life of the soul and of the church, but is to be the life of the world. The presence of his truth and goodness is to be the salt of the earth, and will redeem men from slavery, superstition and crime. There are passages in which he rises into prophetic visions of coming peace and joy, like those of Isaiah. He dips into the future as far as human eye can see, and beholds a new heaven and a new earth. He beholds Christ seated “at the right hand of God, in heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.” He sees “that God hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” “For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell ; and by him to reconcile all things to himself, whether things in earth or

things in heaven. " Thus, "God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." This was the supreme hope of Paul, his unfaltering optimism ; he did not believe in an eternal hell, nor that evil was to forever share the sovereignty of the universe with God ; he believed that God would overcome evil with good ; that Jesus would reign till all things should be subject to him ; that sorrow, remorse, sin, should at last disappear ; in short, that there is a power in Christ which can redeem man from all evil. Christ, to him, was not only the life of the soul and the life of the church, but also the life of the world. These were "the unsearchable riches of God" which Paul preached among the Gentiles. This was the "mystery hid in God from the foundation of the world."

From the beginning to the end of the Epistles, Paul thus regards Christ as the great moral and spiritual power to redeem souls from sin and evil. He reigns as Son of God, not over the outward universe, but over the human heart. There are one or two passages which seem to be exceptions to this. In them Paul appears to teach that Christ was the creator of the outward world ; though still, not as God, but as God's agent and instrument. If so, this is wholly different from the rest of Paul's teach-

ing; it differs from his method of regarding Christ. One of these texts is in Colossians: "For by him were all things created that are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible; whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist, and he is the head of the body, the church, the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence; for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell."

In the first place, there is a mistranslation here. Instead of "by him were all things created," it should be "in him were all things created." Secondly, we notice that these things, thus created in Christ, are all moral powers, not physical or material. They are specified as "thrones, dominions, principalities and powers;" that is, spiritual forces. The passage, therefore, does not refer to the creation of the outward universe, but to the new spiritual universe of truth and love, which proceeds from him, and in him has its consistency, its unity, and its ruler. So John says, "Of his fulness have we all received."<sup>1</sup>

The poets often are the best interpreters of Scripture, and this passage finds its most natural expla-

<sup>1</sup> Rev. C. A. Row, Prebendary of St. Paul's, London, in his recent work, "Revelation and Modern Theology contrasted," speaking of the Greek words *αἰών* and *αιῶνες*, says that the true meaning is not "the world" or "worlds," but "ages" or "dispensations." He adds that "the Jewish mind troubled itself but little about the past or the future history of the material globe; but that with

nation in those lines of Tennyson which speak of Christ's kingdom as —

“One far-off, divine event,  
To which the whole creation moves.”

Paul regards the whole creation as tending towards Christ, and meant to be ultimately redeemed by the fulness of his love. This is the highest flight of the divine muse, which lifted this apostle into the celestial hope of a universal redemption.

If we ask how Paul knew and saw all this, we shall not be able to answer till we know more of the mysteries of spiritual insight and foresight. There is a prophetic power in the human soul, which allies it to God and eternity. How it acts, we cannot say. But there are those who have been caught up into the third heaven, and have heard wonderful words, which it is not lawful to utter. Such an one was Paul.

It will be well for Christianity when this view of Christ, taken by Paul, shall displace and replace the dogmatic and ecclesiastical views which have so long prevailed. This is the truly evangelical belief in Christ. It regards him as an ever-flowing fountain of spiritual and moral life; divine, because the image of the unseen God; divine, because bringing

which it was deeply concerned was a number of periods in the divine government, which it designated ‘ages’ or ‘dispensations.’ The idea of ‘worlds’ in our modern sense of the term, meaning a system of suns with their attendant planets, never entered into their thoughts.” Page 175.



God to us, and bringing us to him. It makes him the ever-living, ever-present head of the church, the human brother, as well as the celestial master. It gives our hearts the dearest object of love, next to God; it supplies us with a friendship which earth cannot give nor take away. In this view of Christ, is progress, growth, sincerity, union, and peace. This is the master and friend whom we need; who says to us always, "Abide in me and I in you."

"The letter fails, and systems fall,  
And every symbol wanes;  
The Spirit, over-brooding all,  
Eternal Love remains."

The ideal Christ of Paul, with whom he lived in intimate communion, must not be conceived on the one hand as a creature of the imagination, or as an abstraction separated from the personal Jesus; nor on the other hand as an exceptional, miraculous, or supernatural manifestation, given to Paul alone. That his Christ was not an imaginary being appears from all of Paul's language, from the power which he derived from this intercourse, and from the words of Christ in the gospels, in which he promised to come nearer to his disciples after death than he had been before. Paul was a man of good sense, of sound practical judgment, and a clear mind. He was not a dreamer or a mystic. Yet it is certain that he believed himself inspired and guided by an interior communion with the risen master. But this need not be regarded as miraculous or supernatural, in the



sense of a preternatural exception to the laws of human thought. The same faith has been cherished in all ages. Read the Methodist hymns, and see what a constant inward communion they suppose, not only with God, but with the personal Jesus. Is there anything unnatural in such communion? If we believe that Jesus is the living and ascended master, and that he is still interested in the work of his kingdom, why is not such intercourse natural? Paul, and all those subsequent to him who have had this faith, have not regarded themselves in communion with the Supreme Being when they talk with Christ. Practically, he is a spiritual friend, quite distinct from God.

A book lately published, written by Protap Mozoomdar, a Hindu theist, shows how a soul seeking strength and peace can come into this personal relation with Jesus, just as Paul did, apart from Christian teaching, and without becoming a member of the Christian church. Mozoomdar does not even profess to be a Christian, yet how much deeper is his faith in Christ than that of many orthodox Christians! This extract is from a work called "The Oriental Christ," published by Geo. H. Ellis, Boston.

"Nearly twenty years ago my studies, troubles, and circumstances, forced upon me the question of personal relationship to Christ. Though for a short time taught in a Government College in Calcutta, where no moral or religious instruction is ever given, and where, on the contrary, a good deal of the

opposite influence is directly or indirectly imbibed, I was early awakened to a sense of deep inner unworthiness. Placed in youth by the side of a very pure and powerful character, whose external conditions were very similar to my own, I was helped to feel, in the freshness of my susceptibilities, by the law of contrast, that I was painfully imperfect, and needed very much the grace of a saving God. In the Brahmo Somaj this consciousness of imperfection soon developed into a strong sense of sin. The doctrine of original corruption never occupied my boyhood or youth; the fear of eternal punishment never biassed my thought or aspiration. I was never taught to feel any undue leaning toward the Christian Scriptures, or the Christian religion. Mine was a strong, unforced consciousness of natural and acquired unworthiness. Definite recollection or conscious analysis does not give me any clue into it or why it was. But this I do very clearly remember, that as the sense of sin grew upon me, and with it a deep, miserable restlessness, and a necessity of reconciliation between aspiration and practice, I was mysteriously led to feel a personal affinity to the Spirit of Christ. The whole subject of the life and death of Christ had to me a marvellous sweetness and fascination. I repeat, I can never account for this. Untaught by any one, not sympathized with even by the best of my friends, often discouraged and ridiculed, I persisted in according to Christ a tenderness of honor which arose in my heart unbidden.

"About the year 1867 a painful period of spiritual isolation overtook me. . . . My inward trials had reached a crisis. It was a week-day evening in the summer. The gloomy and haunted shades had thickened into darkness. I sat near a large lake in the Hindu College grounds. Near me rose the giant mass of a grim old tree. A sobbing, gusty wind swam over the water's surface; the ripples sounded on the grassy brook. I was meditating on the state of my soul and the cure of spiritual wretchedness. . . . I prayed and besought Heaven. Suddenly it seemed to me — let me say it was revealed to me — that close to me there was a holier, more blessed, more loving personality, upon which I might repose my troubled head. Jesus lay discovered in my heart as a strange human kindred love, as a repose, a sympathetic consolation, an unpurchased treasure, to which I was freely invited. The response of my nature was unhesitating and immediate. Jesus, from that day, became to me a reality on whom I might lean. It was an impulse then, a flood of light, love, and consolation. It is no longer an impulse now. It is a faith and principle, an experience verified by a thousand trials. . . . Jesus is to me a holy, sacrificed, exalted self, whom I recognize as the true Son of God."

I have quoted at length this very touching and interesting statement, as it seems to me in the highest degree suggestive. It is a testimony to the power of the living Jesus, the living Christ, from the heart

of Asia. It is the independent testimony of one not converted by any missionary, who does not profess to be a Christian, who still remains a Hindoo Theist. You cannot say that this experience was the result of Christian preaching or teaching; it was not the outcome of prejudice or habit. The prejudices and habits were the other way. It shows the power that there was, and still is, in the character of Jesus. It shows that Jesus is living, and is alive forevermore. It is a fulfilment of his promise, "Lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the age!"

This experience is also singularly like that of the apostle Paul. It is that of an outsider, converted and made a friend; it is a conversion brought about by an inward revelation of Christ himself to the soul. Paul did not join the Christian church at Jerusalem when he became a Christian. Mozoomdar did not join the Christian church in India. But both could say, "The life I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God."

This Christ, like that of Paul, is the ideal Christ, the Christ in whom are contained the ideas of the grace of God, forgiveness through faith in God's love, and the unity of aspiring and ascending souls.

That Paul never regarded Christ as God, is the opinion of the leading scholars of the Continent, who study his writings with the perfect impartiality of emancipated critics. To such students it would not

make the slightest difference in their own belief whether Paul considered Christ to be God, or not. Their testimony is the more valuable on this account, as they have no theological bias in either direction; their sole interest as critical scholars is to see the actual facts. Baur, for instance, says,<sup>1</sup> "It is certainly high time for interpreters to agree that Christ is not called God in Romans ix. 5. When we consider how deeply the religious consciousness of the Apostle was penetrated with the idea of God as the Absolute Being, and how constantly and distinctly he recognizes the relation of Christ to God as one of subordination, it cannot be believed that in this one particular passage he has called Christ the absolute God, exalted over all." Baur goes on to argue this at some length, and then proceeds to consider other passages in which it is claimed that Christ is called God. Of 1 Cor. viii. 6, where it is said of Christ, "through whom are all things and we through him," Baur points out that Christ is here plainly distinguished from God, and, comparing the passage with 2 Cor. v. 17, concludes that "all things" here refer to the things belonging to the new spiritual kingdom of redemption which comes from God through Christ.

Considering carefully other passages, in which pre-existence is supposed to be ascribed to Christ, Baur rejects that interpretation. Christ is "the second *man*, the Lord from heaven." "What does the

<sup>1</sup> "Paulus," &c., first edition, 1845. Also compare the English translation of Zeller's edition, 1875.



Apostle mean by such statements as these, but that Christ was essentially man, man like Adam, only man in a higher sense? All that is left for us to ask is, . . . What is the higher principle which we are to connect with this human nature of Christ? This higher principle the Apostle designates as the heavenly and spiritual element in him; not in the sense of some divine principle different from human nature added to it, but as the purer form of human nature itself. Christ is the Lord from heaven, the heavenly master, as being the typical man, not existing in a purely ideal form, but that which man essentially and really is in the inmost essence of his being. Adam represents the earthly and lower nature, Christ the spiritual and higher element in humanity.”<sup>1</sup> Dean Stanley also,<sup>2</sup> commenting on 1 Cor. xv. 28, says, “This final subordination of the Son to the Father is apparently the object of this digression;” and adds that Paul here “points our thoughts to a time when the reign of all intermediate objects, even of Christ himself, shall cease, and God fill all the universe.”

If we examine the writings of Paul in reference to the development of his opinions and faith in regard to Christ, we cannot fail to see a distinct progress, from the beginning. In the earliest Epistles (those to the Thessalonians) Jesus is regarded chiefly as “*The*

<sup>1</sup> “Paulus, der Apostel Jesu Christi.” Drittes Theil, achtes Kapitel. Stuttgart. 1845.

<sup>2</sup> The Epistles of St. Paul to the Corinthians, third edition, 1865.



*Christ*," or King, who died and rose, and is soon to appear as the real king of the world; he thinks of the Christ within him as to come outwardly in power and glory. But in the Epistle to the Galatians, Christ becomes the principle of spiritual freedom, the living guide and inspiration of his followers. He is to be formed within them (Gal. iv. 19); they are to adopt his spirit and be clothed with his character (Gal. iii. 27); and by his cross are to be crucified to the world (Gal. vi. 14). In the Epistle to the Romans, Christ is looked upon as the Divine Son, declared such by his Resurrection (Rom. i. 4), who brings pardon and peace to the soul (Rom. iii. 22) by the power of faith (Rom. v. 1), and plants within the principle of eternal life (Rom. vi. 23; viii. 2). His love in the heart is the principle of power and life (Rom. viii. 10, 35), and so he becomes the Lord and Master of the dead and the living (Rom. xiv. 9). Thus we see that Christ has now become to Paul the principle of inward life, peace, and power to each individual soul.

But from this point the Apostle goes forward, and finds Christ not merely the Saviour of the individual from sin and death, but the unity of life among all who love him. Freedom alone, as it is taught in the Epistle to the Galatians, tends to atomism. When men seek only the salvation of their own soul, the tendency is to selfish separation. But Paul, especially in the Epistles to the Corinthians, finds in the love of Christ a power of organized life, putting

an end to sectarianism, and uniting all good men and women into one body. Christ now becomes the head of the household of faith, the principle of divine love in the hearts of his followers, the unity of the Spirit, and the bond of peace. He is wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1 Cor. i. 30); the foundation on which the whole church rests (1 Cor. iii. 11), and by which all the members are united into one body (1 Cor. xii. 27).

If we now pass to the Epistles of the Imprisonment (Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians), we discover another step of progress in Paul's view of Christ. He is not only the principle of life in the individual soul, the conquering master of the world, the organizing spirit of union in the church; but he is the culmination of history, the end toward which all events are being providentially led, the mysterious secret which is to explain the confusion of the world, the ideal truth and beauty for the sake of which all things were made. (Eph. i. 4, 10, 21, 23; Phil. xi. 10; Col. i. 15.) The Epistle to the Ephesians is perhaps the loftiest flight ever taken by spiritual inspiration. It is a magnificent symphony, in which the theme is repeated in various forms. It is a Pindaric ode, in which with each strophe, the idea returns again and again, mounting higher and higher in its divine flight. If Paul did not write this Epistle, then there must have been a second Paul, an unknown, unnamed apostle, like the first, but even greater than he. It has Paul's rushing earnestness of thought, his compact, sharp

expression, his condensed fire, and all of his glowing love for Christ. And to this is added a certain abstract, contemplative immersion in the highest spiritual ideas, — such as might be unfolded in the mind of a prisoner, cut off from his work, and left to solitary communion with his own soul and with God.<sup>1</sup>

In this steady development of the idea of Christ in Paul's mind, we see an example of the principle of inspiration laid down in an earlier chapter. Every kind of inspiration, that of the poet, artist, discoverer, or prophet, is like a seed, which springs up and unfolds into all that logically belongs to it, — according to Christ's saying, "first the blade, then the ear, afterward the full corn in the ear." The fact that "every seed has its own body," that an acorn must develop into an oak, with the woody fibre of an oak, the bark, leaves, blossom, fruit of an oak, is just as wonderful and incomprehensible as that an idea should develop into its correlated thoughts, beliefs, and resultant actions. The growth of an acorn may be crippled by bad soil, distorted by accidents, impeded by injurious conditions; but if it grows, it *must* grow into an oak, in which all parts are correlated by

<sup>1</sup> Those who deny the Pauline authorship of Ephesians and Colossians, suppose them to have been written in the second century against the Gnostics. Why, then, is there no trace in Ephesians of this polemic purpose? No one in reading it would imagine any such controversial intention. This theory assumes that an epistle was forged in the name of Paul, to put down Gnostic speculations by his authority, and that these speculations are scarcely referred to.

some unseen, inexplicable, but certain law. So each living and inspired idea must grow, if not impeded and hindered, into a special cycle of definite results. And this harmony of thought, according to Bacon, is the best proof of the truth of any system.

A like harmony of parts, determined by the idea of the whole, we find in every great work of art. The very principle of art is this unity in variety. Every great picture or poem or architectural work has this mark of excellence. If the details have not been harmonized into unity by the controlling idea, we are sensible of the discord. Every character of Shakespeare has its unity of life, and whatever each of his "personæ" says, from first to last, is in harmony with himself. In our dreams, when imagination is particularly active, we unconsciously make the persons we create speak and act in character. The idea, when fully apprehended, rules the development of thought. Thus the Idea of Christ in the mind of Paul gradually unfolded itself, under the action of thought and experience, into a systematic whole. There are, no doubt, dead opinions in his memory, the fossil remains of his old belief, not yet eliminated. But the living and growing part of his faith, that which he lived from and loved, belongs to the new creation, of which he said, "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creation."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### PAUL'S IDEAS IN REGARD TO THE ATONEMENT; OR, INFLUENCE OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

THE question we have next to ask is this: "What did Paul teach concerning the influence of the death of Christ on salvation? Did he teach, as has often been supposed, the doctrine of Vicarious Atonement, as held by Calvin and his followers?"

What is this doctrine, as it has been taught by Calvin and Calvinists?

The doctrine is essentially this: That while the *mercy* of God made him wish to forgive the sins of penitent sinners, his *justice* made it impossible to do so till some atonement had been made, some suffering inflicted, some expression of the divine wrath against sin publicly manifested. This atonement was made by the death of Christ, who offered himself as a sacrifice to God for our sins, was punished in our place, satisfied the justice of God, appeased his wrath, and reconciled him to us. The essence of the doctrine is that Christ, by his death, did something which made it possible for God to forgive human sin, which otherwise he could not have done.

Calvin, in his Institutes, says, "God was an enemy to men till, by the death of Christ, they were restored to his favor;" that Christ has received and suffered in his own person the punishment which, by the righteous judgment of God, impended over all sinners; that by his blood he has expiated those crimes which rendered them odious to God; that by this expiation God the Father has been satisfied and duly atoned; that by this intercessor his wrath has been appeased. "It was necessary," he says, "that Christ should feel the severity of the divine vengeance, in order to appease the wrath of God and satisfy his justice." "He was made a substitute for transgressors, to sustain all the punishments which would have been inflicted on them."<sup>1</sup>

The Assembly's Catechism teaches that Christ "hath, by his death, fully satisfied the justice of God, and purchased reconciliation for us." It adds (chapter xi. 3), "Christ, by his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all who are justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to his Father's justice in their behalf."

The doctrine of Vicarious Atonement, then, according to Calvinism, teaches—

1. That God was an enemy to man until Christ died.
2. That Christ satisfied the justice of God, and paid our debt.

<sup>1</sup> Calvin's Institutes, Book ii., c. 16, §§ 2, 10.



3. That he was a substitute, to be punished in our place, and was so punished, and suffered God's wrath, and all the punishment due to sinners.

4. That he has thus reconciled God to man, and made it possible for God to forgive our sins, which he could not have done otherwise, even though man repented.

Did Paul teach either of these four doctrines?

1. Did he teach that God was an enemy to man till Christ died?

Paul always teaches that sin makes man an enemy to God, estranges and alienates him; but never that it makes God an enemy to man. He says: "If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." He does not say: "If, when *God* was *our* enemy *he* was reconciled to us by the death of his son," — which is what Calvin teaches. Paul also says distinctly that God did not need to be reconciled to men, since he loved them while they were sinners, and before Christ died. "God commended his love toward us in that, while we were sinners, Christ died for us." And to the Ephesians Paul says: "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ and saved us by free grace."

Paul, therefore, does not teach the first of these Calvinistic doctrines in regard to the Atonement, namely, that God was an enemy to man till Christ

died, but the precise opposite, — that is, that the death of Christ was the result of the love of God, who sent him to give his life and his death for a sinful world.

2. Next, we ask whether Paul teaches that Jesus satisfied the justice of God, and paid the debt due to the Almighty by mankind?

If this doctrine is found anywhere, it is found in the words "ransom" and "redemption." Ransom was the money paid to redeem those taken captive and enslaved. It was the custom, in antiquity, to enslave prisoners taken in war. Then their friends would raise sums of money to redeem them from the hands of their enemy. Debtors, also, who could not pay, were sold as slaves, among the Romans and other nations. They also might be redeemed by friends paying the debt or ransom. It is certainly said that "Christ gave his life a ransom for many," and that "we are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ; but it is nowhere said that the debt was paid to God, or that God was the stern creditor who held us enslaved till the full ransom was paid to him. On the contrary, the saints in heaven, according to the Book of Revelation, praise the Lamb, because he has "redeemed them to God by his blood." Sin is the slaveholder, Sin the cruel tyrant from whose service we are redeemed. Paul tells the Corinthians that they must shun all vices, all intemperance and wickedness, because they are bought with a price, and now belong not to sin, but to God,

who has redeemed them by the death of his son from the power of evil.

The world, in the days of Paul, was full of slaves, — either prisoners of war or enslaved for debt. The most benevolent action that men could then perform was to redeem such persons by paying a ransom for them. Men, in like manner, who committed sin, were the slaves of sin; and it was a natural figure, to say that Christ gave his life and his death to redeem men from the slavery of sin and evil. But it is never taught that Christ redeemed men from the justice of the Almighty. Whatever debt we owe to God, he freely forgives us, the condition being only this, — that we, trusting in his love, shall repent of our sin, and forgive others their debt to us. Our daily prayer says, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;” not, “Forgive us our debts, because Christ has paid them.” The parable teaches that when the servants who owed their lord had nothing to pay, “he frankly forgave them both.” In fact, if the debt due to God was paid by Christ, forgiveness would be impossible. If Christ fully atoned and made satisfaction to God for human sin, there would be no place left for the divine mercy.

3. Still less does Paul teach that Christ was punished in the place of man, or that he bore the wrath of God in our place. No such theological figment as this is anywhere taught by Paul. Jesus himself declares that he bore the love of God in his heart, not the wrath of God, when he gave his life. “There-

fore doth my father love me, because I lay down my life."

It is not necessary to dwell longer on these theories, for they are fast passing away. Probably there is not left a single genuine, thorough-going Calvinist to-day in all New England. Orthodox men continue to speak of the atonement, of Christ's sacrificial death, of his vicarious suffering. But when you ask what all this means, it is hard to find out. A revivalist may still talk about the saving efficacy of "blood," and compare the blood of Christ to a railway ticket, which will pass us through to heaven when we believe in it. But such statements are very rare. Another may think he has improved the theory by changing "punishment" into "chastisement," and saying that Christ consented to be chastised in our place. But this makes little difference. Dr. Bushnell tells us that while Orthodoxy uses the old words about sacrifice and atonement, there is no agreement at all as to their meaning.

Nevertheless, it is true that a great deal is said by Paul concerning the influence of the death of Jesus in connection with the forgiveness of sin. Let us look at some of his expressions; "Christ died for the ungodly." "We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." "God hath set forth Jesus Christ to be a propitiation [a mercy-seat] through faith in his blood." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself." "Having made peace by the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself."

“Christ gave himself for our sins.” “He redeemed us from the curse of the law.” “We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of our sins.” “He gave himself a ransom for all.” “Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us.”

It is no wonder that when we meet such phrases as these in the New Testament, which have been quoted again and again in support of some Calvinistic theory, we should imagine that they really teach that theory, and that Paul taught some doctrine of vicarious atonement. But a little consideration will show us what he meant by this language, and why he used it.

When Jesus came, the religious worship of Jews, Greeks, and Romans was chiefly by means of sacrifices. Every day in the Jewish temple, victims were sacrificed from morning till evening, on the great altar which stood before the Holy Place. In Athens, in Corinth, in Rome, in Antioch, in Alexandria, it was the same. This was almost the only public worship which men knew. With the coming of Christianity all this passed away. It has passed away so entirely that we can hardly understand the feeling that prompted it. But that feeling was sincere. Mankind prayed by sacrifice; they confessed their sins by sacrifice; they sought pardon by sacrifice; they felt nearer to God, and more at peace in their hearts, when they had offered a sacrifice. By sacrifices they thanked God for his mercy, adored his power, bowed before his holiness, sought his pardon



for their sins, asked his blessings on their enterprises and undertakings.

This whole system disappeared with Christianity. Must not the world have been amazed at a religion without a temple, an altar, or a victim? "How can one approach God?" they cried; "how obtain his pardon by your religion? It is empty of any worship; it is desolate and cold. Where is the splendid ritual, the grand services, the hecatombs of victims, the clouds of incense, the generous sacrifice of our wealth to God?"

Paul and the other apostles answer: "Christ is our sacrifice. Through him we all have access to God. Whatever the sacrifices of the old religion have done for you is now done by him. He is the great victim. He brings us to God. He is our lamb, slain from the foundation of the world; our passover, sacrificed for us. By his stripes we are healed. His pure blood, so generously given, is a proof to us of God's perpetual love. It is not the wrath of God, but the love of God, which appears in Christ's death. God so loved the world that he gave his dearest child to die for us. God commended his love towards us, in that while we were sinners Christ died for us. Whatever the sacrifices were, whatever they did, Jesus has done. The one object of all the sacrifices was to bring men to God. This is what Christ has done. He is ransom, redemption, propitiation, intercession."

It is certain that, as a mere matter of fact, the death of Christ was not a sacrifice. A sacrifice is a



sacred offering slain as an act of worship. Christ was killed by his enemies out of hatred. Those who killed him had no idea of worshipping by that act. He was not literally, but spiritually a sacrifice; a victim offering himself to do God's will and help mankind. One writer in the New Testament, says: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered himself, a blameless victim to God, purge your consciences." It is the Eternal Spirit which purifies the soul, the eternal spirit of generosity and goodness, — not physical blood, but divine self-sacrifice. That is the power in the death of Jesus.

Sacrifices are so foreign from our way of thinking and feeling that we do not realize that men actually did worship God in that way. They did come near to him by these gifts that they brought him. They did try to show their love in this way, and were happier and better for doing it.

The great object of all worship is to come near to God. He seems so far away, so high above us, so different from ourselves, that we do not feel free to talk to him as a friend talks with a friend. When we know we have done many wrong things, we are afraid on that account to come; we think he must be displeased and estranged, and that we have no right to come near him until something is done to appease him. In ancient times, when a king was offended, his subjects brought presents to placate him. In the naïve simplicity of antiquity, men did the same

to God. They gave him the best gifts they had, — oxen, sheep, or even their children. But the work of Christ was to make God seem so near to man, and man to God, as to show that no propitiation was necessary. This was the blessing that he conferred on the world. His death put an end to the whole feeling which caused sacrifices to be offered. His heavenly devotion showed what God's love was; and so Christ lived and died to reconcile man to God once for all. It is not God who is turned away from us, it is we who are turned away from him. It is not God who needs to be reconciled to man, it is man who needs to be reconciled to him.

All these theories, therefore, which assume that anything is needed to be done to reconcile God and appease his anger, or make his justice and mercy at one, belong to a Pagan conception of the Deity. They are not only ante-Christian, but anti-Christian. It is because we cannot forgive others without some atonement that we fancy God needs some atonement. It is because we are hard and unforgiving to men that we think God will be hard and unforgiving to us. The moment that we are able freely and generously to forgive others, we are able to see that God can also freely forgive us. That is why Jesus said, "If ye forgive not others, God will not forgive you." It is because we cannot believe that he can forgive us while we are implacable. To the pure he shows himself pure, to the merciful man he shows himself

merciful, and to the unmerciful man he necessarily seems unmerciful.

The harm of the Calvinistic doctrine of Vicarious Atonement is that it prevents us from seeing this unbought mercy, this ever-present benign love of the Heavenly Father. It teaches that it was impossible for God to forgive till he was propitiated by some sacrifice; that his justice needed to be appeased. If so, why ought not an atonement to be made to our justice before we forgive? If God, being justly offended, needed to be propitiated; then we, being justly offended, have a right to demand a similar propitiation. The hard view of God makes us hard toward each other. But the apostle Paul teaches that God needs no propitiation; he himself offers a propitiation to man. "God has set forth Jesus as a propitiation." God does not demand a propitiation, but he gives one, — the outflow and affluence of his tenderness to man; he shows that his justice is only another name for his love; that he can be just, and justly forgive those who see his love in the face of his Son. According to the old system, men brought their victims to propitiate God; according to Christianity, God lets his Son devote himself as a victim to propitiate the world.

Still, we must ask what there was especially in the death of Christ which brings men to God.

There has always been a great power in the death of Jesus to touch the human heart. We cannot read the story, often as we have read it, without a new

sense of the divine mystery of that holy sacrifice. All the Gospel culminates there. It is not merely the fact of death which touches us thus nearly. Men are dying around us every day. It is not self-inflicted or bravely-encountered death which touches us. The duellist, the soldier, the suicide, go of their own accord to meet death, and we remain unmoved. It is the nobility of soul which glorifies the victim. The death of the three hundred at Thermopylæ; of Socrates, taking the poison; of Gustavus Adolphus, dying on the field of Lutzen for freedom of spirit; of the martyrs for truth and God who have gone cheerfully to death, rather than deny the truth; Sir Thomas More, the Catholic; Latimer, Ridley, Rogers, the Protestants; the exiles, who have left their native land rather than accept the rule of the oppressor; Abraham Lincoln, and the brave men who died in the war for freedom and union,—this noble army of martyrs, in every age, lift us nearer to God by showing that he can support the soul by his presence, and raise it above mortal agony in the sweet sense of his love. It is the greatness of the cause and greatness of the soul which gives power to sacrifice. Jesus, the greatest soul on earth, gave his life to the greatest cause of all, and so he brings the whole world nearer to God. But it was by “the Eternal Spirit” that he gave it,—the Spirit which works from everlasting to everlasting in every loving soul throughout all worlds.

The great fact is, that God’s love works through

human love to convert and save men. The only power to make men better is goodness. Fear and force can prevent them from becoming worse; these can prevent the outbreak of crime; but only generous love can make mankind better. All generous self-sacrifice uplifts the world. Consider the story of Livingstone, dying among his negroes in Central Africa, and these poor fellows wrapping up his body, and carrying it on their shoulders through the wilderness to the sea, that it might be given to his friends. Such an influence had his generous life made on their savage hearts. I heard, the other day, the story of some of the most savage and cruel Indians, who were taken to a Florida fort to be imprisoned, and were there treated with such kindness by the officer, Captain Brooks, that they were changed from barbarity to gentleness, and went of their own accord to the school at Hampton.

The death of Jesus was not, then, an exceptional event, but the highest manifestation of the eternal law of love. It was through the Eternal Spirit that he offered himself to God in the service of man.

All theories of the Atonement fall into two classes, —mythological and spiritual. The mythological theory teaches that it was some transaction in the supernatural world; some work done to satisfy the divine justice, or to make peace between the unreconciled attributes of God, —in short, to make it possible for God to forgive his penitent child.

The other theories are spiritual. They teach that



Christ died to manifest the eternal love of God ; not to create it, but to make it known ; and that his death is the supreme example of a power which comes down from heaven into human hearts to purify, redeem, and save the world. It teaches that we all can live and act in this same spirit, all be mediators of this divine life, all can unite with Jesus in reconciling men to God and to each other.

Paul said that he rejoiced in his sufferings, which enabled him "to fill up that which was behind in the sufferings of Christ" (Col. i. 24). This text has much perplexed the theologians, whose theories declare that Christ's sufferings were a full and perfect satisfaction for the sins of all mankind. Paul seems to say that his own sufferings supplied that which was deficient in those of Christ. The truth is that human self-sacrifice carries on the work of Christ. All sufferings, generously endured for the sake of our brothers, partake of the nature of Christ's sufferings, and do the same atoning work. They make it easier to believe in a Divine Love, because we have seen the same love in man. If men forgive us, we believe God can forgive us. Man's love, therefore, like that of Christ, reconciles the world to God ; and the blood of martyrs has a similar redeeming power to that of Jesus.

It is sometimes asked, "Shall we think that the death of Jesus was only that of a martyr?" It is certain that Jesus himself declared that he came to be a martyr to the truth. "To this end was I born,



and for this cause came I into the world, that I might be a martyr [*ἵνα μαρτυρήσω*] to the truth" (John xviii. 37). He also said that he "came to give his life a ransom [*λύτρον*] for many" (Matt. xx. 28). The words "ransom" and "redemption," however, when applied to the death of Jesus, certainly cannot be taken literally. "Ransom" literally means something valuable paid to the slave-holder, to deliver his victim from his hands. But the death of Christ was not paid to any slave-holder; it was an offering made to God and to man by the heavenly love of Jesus, willingly given in his efforts to convince his fellow-men of the truth of his divine Gospel. That which his life could not do, his death accomplished. It touched the hearts of multitudes, and filled them with penitence and faith. So it redeemed them, by delivering them from the slavery of sin. It was a ransom only as it produced the same result as a ransom, in breaking the chains of sin, and delivering the captive from its power. "For whoever commits sin, is the slave of sin" (John viii. 34; compare Rom. vi. 16).

It is a curious fact that the attempt to take these words "ransom" and "redemption" literally, produced a theory of the Atonement, which, though now almost forgotten, was the orthodox belief in the Catholic Church for a thousand years. It was argued that if Christ's death was a ransom paid to redeem us from slavery, it must have been paid to some enemy who held us captive. This enemy was not God, for

God is the sinner's friend, but could only be the Devil. The Devil had a right to hold us as slaves, in consequence of our sins. The rights of the Devil must be respected, even by the Deity, and some equivalent must be paid to the Devil if we are to be made free. This equivalent was found in Christ, over whom, being innocent, the Devil had no claims; and whose death, he being divine, was an equivalent for the sins of all mankind. When therefore the Devil prompted the Jews to put Jesus to death, he committed a blunder; the consequence of which was that he lost his right to hold any sinners in bondage whose freedom Christ should demand. This theory, which was orthodox doctrine to the time of Anselm, shows what errors may come from taking the figurative language of the Scriptures literally.

Another phrase applied to the death of Jesus, in its relation to man's salvation, is "propitiation." We find it used by Paul (Romans iii. 25): "Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation [or mercy-seat—*ἱλαστήριον*],<sup>1</sup> through faith in his blood," etc. Paul here refers to the sin-offering of the Jews (Lev. iv. and vi.), and to the annual sprinkling of blood on the lid of the Ark on the day of Atonement. But when it is said that Christ is this propitiation, or mercy-seat, or sacrifice for sin, this also cannot be taken literally. First, because the Levitical sacrifices are condemned by the prophets, and by Christ himself, as incapable of doing

<sup>1</sup> Canon Farrar says that this term always means "mercy-seat" in the Old Testament.

away with sin. "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not," says the Psalmist. "To what purpose the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord. I am weary to bear them" (Isaiah i. 11.) "I desired mercy and not sacrifice" (Hosea vi. 6,—quoted by Jesus). So Micah (vi. 6–8), who says that God desires of his people not sacrifices, but to do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly. So (Hebrews xiii. 16) it is said, "To do good and communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." A ritual service thus discredited by the prophets and by Jesus cannot be that which Christ came to fulfil. And, secondly, Paul cannot mean that Christ is a propitiatory sacrifice, since God does not need to be propitiated, according to the Apostle. The whole of Christ's action and suffering was a manifestation of divine love. He was not an offering to God, but God manifest in the flesh. It is therefore evident that the word *ἱλαστήριον* means here what it everywhere means in the Old Testament, the mercy-seat of the Ark of the Covenant. (See the passages under the word in Schleusner, "Lexicon in LXX. aut Novus Thesaurus in LXX.") In the First Temple, the Ark contained the stone tables of the law. Once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest entered the Holy Place to purify it, and sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice either on or near the mercy-seat. He carried in with him a censer of incense, to make a smoke above the mercy-seat. In that cloud of incense Jehovah was believed to manifest himself as meeting and

communing with his people, above the mercy-seat (Ex. xxv. 22). When, therefore, Jesus is compared with the mercy-seat, sprinkled with his own blood, the idea naturally conveyed to the Jewish mind would be that through him God *meets with us, forgiving our sins, and communing with us*. We enter into union with God, through Christ.

Paul means to say to his Jewish hearers, accustomed to their sin offerings and propitiations: "When you have seen the blood of your victim sprinkled on the altar, or when the High Priest on the Day of Atonement sprinkles the blood on the mercy-seat, this means to you that God will have mercy on you, and accept your repentance. Now, instead of asking you for a victim to make him propitious, God has himself set forth this victim, Jesus, as a mercy-seat, where he will meet you; as he says [Exodus xxv. 22], 'There will I meet with thee, and commune with thee, from above the mercy-seat.' God has made Jesus such a mercy seat, where man can commune with him by faith. The old mercy-seat was hidden in the Holy of Holies, only to be seen by the High Priest. But God has *set forth* this mercy-seat of communion, where all may come. It is a *manifestation* of his present, immediate love. It shows that God is *just*, as well as merciful, in forgiving our sins; because his forgiveness takes them away, and leaves them in the past."<sup>1</sup> This is the probable meaning of this passage (Rom.

<sup>1</sup> So 1 John i. 9. "If we confess our sins, God is *faithful and just* [not merely merciful] to forgive us our sins."

iii. 25, 26) which has been such a battle-ground for theologians.

The way in which the death of Christ brings to us pardon may be thus explained: When we are conscious of our imperfection and sin, we shrink from the Divine presence, just as we avoid the presence of any man whom we have injured, and who, we suppose, is offended with us. We have a sense of Divine displeasure resting on us, not because God is really angry, but because he seems to us to be offended. We think he ought to be offended, our conscience thus taking sides against us; and this feeling is so painful that, to escape it, we turn away from the thought of God, and try to forget him. But our only strength for improvement must come to us from faith in God's presence and love. That is the real inspiration of goodness. Thus conscience, instead of making us better may make us worse, by discouraging us, and causing us to feel that God must be displeased with us. So "the strength of sin is the law;" and "that which was ordained to be life, becomes death." Christ meets and removes this difficulty by revealing to us, in his own character, the infinite love of God to his sinful children. As a holy being, pure and sinless, Jesus represents the holiness of God; as ready to forgive and love the penitent sinner, he represents the mercy of God. By this combined influence he reconciles to our mind the Divine justice and mercy; and shows not only that the justice of God *allows* him to be merciful to those who have faith in



him, but that justice *obliges* him to be merciful; since through faith in Christ and God our sins are taken out of us, and a pure love substituted in its place.

This is the thought which we find pervading the writings of Paul. He sees in faith a power which so purifies the soul as to make forgiveness an act of God in which mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other. It takes away our fear that we cannot be forgiven without some expiation or offering to the Divine justice. Christ, says Paul, takes the place of all offering and propitiation. He becomes our reconciliation and atonement. He reveals the Divine love and truth as perfectly at one in the forgiveness of our sin. He died to complete this great manifestation of heavenly grace. All sacrifices are fulfilled in him. He who sees him, sees the Father, of whom he is the image.

Theologians are very fond of such expressions as expiation, expiatory sacrifice, expiatory victim, vicarious sacrifice, vicarious atonement, — *none* of which terms are in the New Testament. The doctrine of Paul, summed up in a word is this,—that Christ is such a revelation of the Divine love to sinners that all who penitently trust in that love are forgiven their past sin, are reconciled to God, and are placed in communion with him as their Father and Friend.

The object of Christ's death, therefore, was not to reconcile God to man, but to reconcile man to God.



This is everywhere the doctrine of Paul. In no one place does he speak of God's being reconciled to man. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself," — not himself to the world (2 Cor. v. 19). "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son," — not God reconciled to us (Rom. v. 10). It is "we who were afar off," and "are made nigh by the blood of Christ," — not God who was afar off, and has been brought nigh (Eph. ii. 13). "It pleased the Father, having made peace by the blood of the cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself," — not himself to all things (Col. i. 10).

Every theory of the atonement, therefore, which supposes that the death of Christ made God more ready to forgive, breaks down before the constant statement of Scripture to the contrary. Three of these theories have passed in succession over the Christian church, each, in its day, the orthodox theory of the Atonement. The first came in those early ages, when captives taken in war were reduced to slavery, but might be redeemed if their ransom was paid to their owner. This theory seized on the words "ransom" and "redemption" and interpreted them literally, assuming that the ransom was paid to the Devil, the slaveholder of sinners. This may be called "*THE WARLIKE THEORY OF THE ATONEMENT.*" The second was the theory of Anselm, which originated at a time when the great Roman jurists had made the rules of law familiar to the mind of Europe. It may be called "*THE LEGAL THEORY OF THE ATONEMENT.*"

According to Anselm, the Devil had no right except to be punished, and the atonement was not made to the Devil, but to the Divine justice, which demanded of all men either perfect obedience, or an equivalent. To maintain the honor of God, satisfaction must be made to it, and the death of Christ, the God-man, is adequate satisfaction.<sup>1</sup>

This theory of Anselm remained the orthodox doctrine in the church for about five hundred years, when, being discredited by the attacks of the Polish Brethren, it was replaced by another, of which the great publicist, Hugo Grotius was the author. Professedly writing in reply to the Socinians, who had demolished the theory of Anselm, he abandoned all defence of that system, and substituted for it that which goes by the name of "THE GOVERNMENTAL THEORY OF THE ATONEMENT." This rests on the proposition that God, as moral ruler of the universe, cannot forgive sin without an act of exemplary punishment. The influence of Christ's death, therefore, does not relate to the past, but to the future. The guilt of past sin is destroyed by an immediate act of divine love; the example of punishment being necessary to prevent future sin. The principal power of Christ's death is, its moral influence on mankind. The most serious defect of this theory, in the light of orthodoxy, is, that it has no support from

<sup>1</sup>See these theories fully stated in Baur, "Die Christliche Lehre von der Versöhnung." See also my article in the *Christian Examiner*, July, 1845.

Scripture. The Old Testament, in fact, explicitly declares (Ezekiel xviii.) that "when the wicked man turns from the wickedness that he has committed and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive." Nothing is said about punishment, exemplary or otherwise. The prophet, therefore, declares God ready to do what this theory asserts that he is unable to do. In the New Testament, forgiveness is promised on the condition that we, also, are ready to forgive, — on the condition of repentance and confession, of repentance and conversion, — no word being said of the Grotian condition of exemplary punishment. It has also been necessary for the advocates of this theory to maintain that if God should forgive sin on the simple condition of repentance, his moral government would be seriously endangered. To which the reply is easy; that in no way could the moral law be more highly honored than by all the sinners in the universe repenting and submitting to the Divine will. Moreover, according to this theory, the expiatory death of Christ is not founded on the basis of eternal justice, but of legal expediency. It is something done for effect, to make an impression, and has in it too much of a scenic element.

Godet, in his recent Commentary on Romans, gives a brief sketch of some other opinions on this subject among leading theologians of the present day. Hausrath says that the death of Christ was not an isolated fact, but has an ideal and eternal value.

Pfleiderer considers it a manifestation of divine love, — “The ray of love is the real saviour of mankind.” Sabatier says that the texts in Rom. vi. and 2 Cor. v. place the value of Christ’s death in its being the culminating point of self-consecration to the good of mankind. M. de Pressensé takes essentially the same view. Hofmann, Ritschl, and others consider the death of Jesus as the moral resurrection of humanity. That is, it creates a new element of self-sacrificing love, which destroys sin in the heart, and places there a principle which will produce moral perfection. For the sake of that which is to be, God pardons what has been.

If we may be allowed to add another form to these theories of the atoning or reconciling influence of the death of Christ, we should take, as its foundation, the saying of Jesus, “There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.” It is evident from this that, if the sinner really repents, the evil of sin is gone. But repentance includes not only the sense of the misery of wrong-doing, but also faith that we can conquer it. To have this faith, we must believe in the divine pardon and help. The difficulty to be removed is in the conscience, which forever argues that we have no right to the love of God, that we are not worthy of the love of God, that God certainly cannot love us until we make ourselves better by our solitary efforts. Jesus, a ray of perfect goodness, shining out of the very heaven of heavens, shows us God’s love for sinners by his own self-

sacrificing love. This gives us hope and courage. If Jesus, this divinely beautiful apparition, is willing to die in his work of helping wretched, sinful men, is not God infinitely more ready to help them? If Jesus sees something in them worth saving, then God sees it too. If God wishes to save us, we have faith that we can be saved. Thus Jesus' death implies *vicarious suffering*, but not *vicarious punishment*.

The power of this *vicarious suffering* we see illustrated in all generous self-sacrifice for human good. The death of Jesus, like his whole life, is not exceptional, but representative. The power of his death consists in its being the noblest illustration of the good done by every good man's loving sacrifices on behalf of his brethren. Only by the sight of such sacrifices are men persuaded of the reality of unselfish love. When we are convinced that man can thus love his brother-man, we are enabled to believe that God, also, can love us. Thus all vicarious suffering of man for man tends to bring men to God. When we have faith in any unselfish love, the principle is placed within the soul which must sooner or later cast out all sin; and thus God, who sees the fruit in the flower, the flower in the bud, and the bud and plant in the seed, accepts us as we are to be hereafter, and not merely as we are now.

We may see, then, that it is a universal law, that without the vicarious suffering of man for man, the world could never be carried upward into the love of God. As Christ suffered for us, and on account of



our sins, so we must be willing to suffer for others, and on account of their sins. The best expression of this whole theory is in the striking passage in Philippians ii. 1-11, which may be thus paraphrased : —

“If I may appeal to you at all in the name of Christ, if my love for you carries any persuasion with it, if there is any spiritual sympathy between us, if you have any tenderness towards me, or any pity for me, — then I beg of you to make my joy complete by having among yourselves one mind, one heart, one perfect union of soul with soul. Have no small vanities, no narrow personal aims, no petty pride, but go down deep into that modesty which sees all that is good in others, and forgets what is good in itself. Be like Jesus ; have his spirit in you. He was the manifestation of God’s glory in the world, the image of the unseen beauty, wisdom, and power ; but he laid no claim to it, took no pride in it, seemed not to notice it. What he thought of was the need of his brethren. He laid aside his masterly authority as the Son of God, went among men as the servant of the lowest, wished to be only a human brother to all mankind, and pursued the path of obedience till he came to his death — the death of the cross. Wherefore God has highly exalted him, and given him a name above every other name, power above all other power, — power to subdue every mind and heart by his heavenly goodness ; to become the object of reverence to the spirits of holiness above, to human intelligences on earth, and to the perverted spirits below, who have



turned away from God. They, too, must at last be conquered by this sublime generosity, and unite with the rest in saying, 'This is my Master;' and so bring to God the only glory he wishes for, — the glory of being seen by his children as their Father."

What can expiate sin? The answer of the Pagan world was, and is: "We can expiate our sins by sacrifices, self-denials, self-torture, done to placate God. We can humble ourselves before him, and offer him the best things we have; bringing to his temples our wealth, our happiness, our life." This Pagan answer is repeated in Christian lands, when men think that God demands sacrifices, and cannot forgive unless some one suffers to propitiate him.

The Christian answer, and the answer of Paul is: "We can give nothing to God; God must give everything to us. The best and noblest of our race has shown us God's image in his own disinterested sacrifices to save his fellow-men from the power and guilt of sin. The only expiation of sin consists in putting it away, and trusting in that majestic affection which looks down through the ranks of angels and arch-angels, and sees with an infinite pity the sorrows and sins of poor humanity on earth. God needs no propitiation, wishes for no sacrifice. For the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit — a broken and a contrite heart, O Lord, thou wilt not despise. He who spared not his own son, but delivered him for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things? For ye know the munificence of our Lord Jesus

Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye, through his poverty might become rich [2 Cor. viii. 9]. Scarcely for a just man would one die, though possibly, for one who was good enough to inspire love as well as respect, one might even be willing to die. But God showed us the greatness of his love, in that Christ died for us while we were yet sinners [Romans v. 7, 8]." So far is Paul from teaching that God had to be propitiated before he could forgive. It was "while we were sinners" that he loved us. It was *before* the reconciling death of Jesus, *before* this vicarious sacrifice, that God had mercy on the world. This is the statement which refutes every theory which teaches the necessity of some expiation to be made to God, to enable him to forgive.

Still, beneath all these theories, there remains this substantial truth, — that in the human mind there is a permanent antagonism between the ideas of justice and mercy; that we transfer to God this antagonism, and that this is an obstacle to our being forgiven, because it prevents us from believing in forgiveness. And this obstacle, according to all these theories, is overcome by the death of Christ. Each theory first attaches the real difficulty to a theoretical difficulty, and seeks to remove both by explaining how the last may be removed. Thus, the first and oldest theory said to the man who felt that somehow the justice of God would prevent the possibility of his being pardoned: "Yes, you are right in thinking that the

Divine justice is to be satisfied. God's justice demands that the Devil shall be paid a due ransom before he releases you. But now Christ has paid this ransom by his death. Justice is therefore satisfied, and you can trust in the Divine mercy." The second theory said: "Yes, you are right in thinking that the Divine justice must be satisfied before you can be forgiven. God's justice requires that the whole debt shall be paid. But Christ has paid all this debt by his precious blood. Justice, therefore, is satisfied, and you can now trust in the Divine mercy." The third theory said: "Yes, you are right in thinking that something must be done, before you can be forgiven, to remedy the evil your sin has caused to the moral government of God. But Christ's death has done this; and you may now be forgiven." Each of these theoretical difficulties was thus confounded in men's minds with the real difficulty, and both were removed together. The false one being taken out, the true one went out with it.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE HEART OF PAUL.

I COME next to speak of the heart of Paul. I wish to show that this heroic soul, this inspired teacher, this clear-headed thinker, this man of immense practical energy, was also a man of tender affections, warm sympathies, and very dependent on the love of his friends.

It is often supposed that great men are independent of earthly sympathy; that they live in a sphere so high above human interests as to be insensible to the charities of common life. They live for knowledge, or for ambition; or they are devoted to some vast philanthropy, some important pursuit in art, science or politics; and so have no time for daily human love. If there are these persons, I think their brain will usually grow weak and their hand feeble, as their heart grows cold. Napoleon and Byron were probably such men,—gifted with wonderful genius, but egotists and selfish. And the result was that their lives “tapered the wrong way,” and that both ended in failure. But I think that the great men who have

gone steadily onward and upward have had, with an indomitable will and a comprehensive intelligence, also much largeness of heart. Such men were Augustine and Pascal, Luther and Abraham Lincoln. Luther under a rough exterior hid a most loving heart. And so Paul, who was in constant warfare and struggle, could hardly have borne it or gone through with it but for the warm affection of a few friends, on whom he leaned, and with whom he felt himself at home.

A Greek sage tells us that "dry light is best." I have my doubts whether thought, divorced from feeling, is not narrowed as well as chilled. Such dry light has lost, at any rate, much of its magnetic power, and creates little vital interest.

Paul was a man of warm sympathies by nature. He depended on the love of his friends. He could meet and endure all trials; he was ready to die for the truth. He was beaten with stripes five times; with rods three times; stoned once; shipwrecked three times; worn out by constant journeys; in danger on every hand; in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils at sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness; in watchings often; in hunger and thirst; in fastings often; in cold and nakedness. He could bear all this; but one thing was harder to bear, — the coldness and the desertion of his friends. In his last imprisonment at Rome he writes an earnest letter to his spiritual son, "my own Timothy," begging him to come to him. "*Do* come; do come! Demas has forsaken me; he has gone to

Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia; Titus to Dalmatia. All in Asia have turned away from me, among them Phygellus and Hermogenes. On my first appearance in court to be tried, no man stood with me, but all forsook me. But do thy diligence, Timothy, to come to me; do come before winter. Bring the cloak I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, but especially the parchments.”<sup>1</sup> Winter was coming, and Paul was in a cold Roman prison, and was prematurely old from excessive labors and many sufferings. This rough travelling-cloak might give him a little comfort,—and the books, perhaps the old papyrus rolls of Isaiah and Ezekiel, which he had studied in the school of Gamaliel. Let us trust that Timothy arrived before winter, and brought the cloak and the parchments, and with them his warm-hearted sympathy and devoted reverence to cheer the lonely prisoner.

The heart of Paul also appears in his gratitude for every kindness shown to him. “The Lord have mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; but when he was in Rome he sought me out diligently, and found me. And in how many things he ministered unto me in Ephesus thou knowest very well. The Lord grant unto him mercy.”

The heart of Paul is also apparent in the salutations and kind messages sent to each of his individual

<sup>1</sup> Such details confirm the probability that this letter was written by Paul.



friends at the close of his letters. "Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers, who have for my life laid down their own neck. Salute my well-beloved Epœnetus, who is the first fruits of Christ in Asia. Greet Mary, who bestowed much labor on me. Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and fellow-prisoners." And he gives some special message of affectionate remembrance to Ampliatus and Urbane and Stachys and Apelles, to the family of Aristobulus, to Herodion and Narcissus, to Tryphœna and Tryphosa, to Persis, Rufus, Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas. All these he mentions in a single letter.

What an intense interest he felt in the spiritual growth and improvement of his converts! The care of all the churches rested on him day by day, and this perpetual anxiety concerning them was a heavier burden, he tells us, than Jewish stripes or Roman prisons. "Now I live," he says, "when ye stand fast in the Lord." "I thank God that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world." He blesses God for the strong faith of the Romans; for the many brilliant gifts of the Corinthians; for the love shown to all the saints by the Ephesians; for the steadfast, immovable firmness of the Philippians, who shone as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life; and for the progress in good works by the Colossians.

But I think his heart warmed most toward the Thessalonians, in those letters which he wrote to them within a few months after that first visit in which he

had founded their church. He tells them he never forgets their faithful work and loving labors and patient hope; and how willingly and cheerfully they bore persecution; and how their faith in Christ was heard of all around; and how they listened to his gospel, not as to a human word, but as to the very word of God. He tells them how much he was comforted by what Timothy told him about their faith and charity, and their loving remembrance of himself. He cannot think of thanks warm enough to offer to God for all the joy this news had given him, and he prays that God may keep them unblamable forever. He reminds them of his own ardent affection for them, "cherishing them as a nurse cherishes her children," and willing to "give them his very soul because they were so dear to him."

This interest in the spiritual welfare of all his disciples, and also in those fellow-Christians whose faces he had never seen, leads him into an intense realism in his utterance. Most persons, in expressing their good will, confine themselves to large and often vague generalities. Paul gives his friends advice, counsel, encouragement, warning, in regard to every relation and every conjuncture of their lives. He advises husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants how to treat each other according to this new and divine spirit of which all were partakers. He begs and implores them to leave far behind all their old heathen habits of speech and action; to have among them no foolish tattling and jesting, no

covetousness or uncleanness, no strife or vain-glory ; to be moderate in all things ; to rejoice and be glad in the Lord always, and to keep their minds fixed on everything that is pure, lovely, honest, just, true and praiseworthy. He tells them to put away anger, malice, blasphemy, falsehood ; to forgive each other ; to continue in prayer ; to sing psalms and hymns with each other, with love to God in their hearts.

And yet, with all this earnestness of exhortation and advice, his courtesy is equally apparent. The word "courtesy" came from "court," for it has been supposed to flourish best in the courts of kings. Manners there are courtly, no doubt, but the highest courtesy is not a thing of birth or breeding, but comes from a generous, loving heart. High breeding produces outward refinement and good manners. Its voice is not abrupt, but modulated ; it is dignified and urbane, self-controlled and calm. But love makes us think of others and forget ourselves ; it gives us really what good manners simulate ; that is, a desire to make others happy, and an interest in all they do and feel. Politeness assumes to be interested in others ; love is really interested in them. Politeness avoids whatever would hurt the feelings of others ; but love cannot offend, because its sympathy with others is real. Paul was full of this kind of courtesy. His manners were not so much genteel as gentle. We should not call him a genteel man, but he was in the highest sense a gentleman, with no mere outside politeness, but inwardly careful of the feelings of all. We see

this sometimes in little turns of speech. For example, when he says to the Romans, "I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end that you may be established, —" "that is," he adds, "that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me." He substitutes here for instruction, mutual instruction; they can help him no less than he may help them. So, afterward, in the same letter, when he has had occasion to give them some very plain lessons, he says, that though he thus warns them, he knows that they are able to teach and warn each other. "I myself am persuaded of you, brethren, that you are full of goodness, filled with knowledge, able to admonish each other." He urges those who are freed from scruples and superstitions to be tender to those who have not got as far as themselves; which is also a part of true courtesy. "We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."

But what has often been remarked as the most striking example of high bred courtesy is the little letter to Philemon, which has happily been preserved for us, though it might easily have been lost. To a careless eye it might hardly seem worth preserving as a part of the Christian Scripture. Philemon was a prominent man in the church at Colossæ, whose slave, Onesimus, had run away and gone to Cæsarea. There Paul met him, and converted him to Christ. Paul knew that there was no respect of persons with

God. He had learned to call no man common or unclean. So this run-away slave, who had stolen from his master, and who belonged to the class despised by the Jewish Rabbis, and considered by the Romans as mere tools, chattels, implements, was dear to the generous heart of Paul. He had made of the slave a Christian, a brother beloved, a child of God, a disciple of Christ. And now he persuaded him to go back to his master. If that master had been a heathen he would go back to be crucified. But Philemon was a Christian, a spiritual child of Paul. Paul had confidence that he would forgive him, and that this would be best both for the slave and his master.

J. S. Buckminster, in a very striking discourse on this Epistle to Philemon, says:—

“There is a mixture of tenderness and authority, of affection and politeness, in this short letter; an earnestness of intercession united with a care not to offend even by a word; a choice of phrases the least obnoxious, of arguments the most honorable, of motives the most penetrating, which show the writer to have been a man of great address, as well as of strong affections, and master of a persuasion not easily resisted. He crowds together in a few words a multitude of motives, reminding Philemon of his reputation for kindness, his friendship for the writer, of his respect for character, and especially for age, and for Paul’s bonds, and lets fall a suggestion that some deference is perhaps also due to his wishes as an apostle.”



In the old times of American slavery this letter to Philemon used to be triumphantly quoted in defence of the fugitive slave law. A Southern gentleman who once visited me said, "I wonder, Mr. Clarke, you can read the letter to Philemon and not admit that Christianity sanctions slavery!" I answered simply by saying, "Let us read it together, and see if it be so. Let us suppose that this epistle was addressed to you, and that Paul was sending back to you one of the fugitives from your plantation. 'I beseech thee for my son, Onesimus, whom I in my prison have converted to Christ, who was of little use to thee before, but now can be of great use to thee and to me. Receive him as though he were my child, a part of my heart. I would gladly have kept him to be my comfort and help in my chains, but I would do nothing without thine assent and judgment. I do not wish to force thee to do anything. I wish thee to do all willingly, and to receive him again, not as a slave, but better than a slave, even as a beloved brother,—my brother and thine. Receive him as thou would'st receive myself. I write this knowing that thou wilt gladly do even more than I ask.'" Having read this, I turned to my slaveholding friend, and asked him if he still thought that it meant that it was a duty to return slaves, as slaves, to their owners. He frankly admitted that there was not much to support slave-holding in that epistle.

But what I wish to notice is the tone and spirit of this letter. It is that of a Christian gentleman, of



high principles, of exquisite tact, of delicate feeling. Onesimus had stolen money or something else from Philemon, and this offence was not to be overlooked because he had become a Christian. He ought to go back and confess his fault and his penitence to his master. Paul himself willingly agreed to repay whatever Onesimus had taken. This sentence he added in his own autograph: "I, Paul, will repay whatever Onesimus took," the rest of the letter being written as usual by an amanuensis. Paul seemed to suffer from a disease of the eyes, which prevented him from writing much with his own hand. He reminds Philemon that he is Paul, the old man, and a prisoner, and he knows that he might command Philemon to do this act as a duty, but prefers to ask it of him as a favor: "Let me have this joy of thee, my brother; refresh my heart in Christ." He does not even say distinctly what he wishes Philemon to do, but leaves him to find that out from the whole spirit and tone. "Not now as a slave, but better, a brother" — that is all.

This ardent affection for every Christian soul, this undying longing that each might grow up into all Christian graces, had its deep root in Paul's own grateful and devoted love to the Master who had brought him into the love of God. He could forgive because he had himself been forgiven. He loved much, because he had received so much love. This great current of love sweeps on through his letters, making them unique in all literature. The letters of

Cicero and Pliny are stately and highly polished. As models of composition, many, no doubt, are superior to Paul's. It is sometimes hard to make out the grammatical construction of these Pauline epistles; as difficult as to give the geometrical forms of the surface of a tumultuous torrent. It is said of Father Taylor that once in his preaching he suddenly stopped in the midst of a long sentence and said: "Brethren, my nominative has lost its verb; but I am bound to the kingdom of heaven all the same." Thus intricate were Paul's sentences, in the fiery rush of his impetuous desire to warn, comfort, advise and strengthen his dear friends. But what is the chaff to the wheat? Where, in all human literature, can be found writings so vital, so glowing with the fires of the soul, so filled by every gale from heaven, uniting such tenderness, judgment, conscience, trust, hope, generous devotion, interest, sympathy! Here is one wonderful paragraph, in which he pours forth his whole heart, with an eloquence which seems to me to have no parallel in any other human writing:—

"In all things approving ourselves as God's servants; in much patience, in our afflictions, in our necessities, distresses, stripes, imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God; by the armor of righteousness on our right side and our left; by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report;

as deceivers, and yet true ; as unknown and yet well known ; as dying, and behold we live ; as chastened, and not killed ; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing ; as poor, yet making many rich ; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." Paul seems to have been a little astonished at his own eloquence, for he adds : " O Corinthians ! our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged ! "

Though the fire and flow of the paragraph just quoted is unequalled, yet there is another strain of a yet higher mood ; one chapter in which wonderful insight is united with perfect utterance. I speak of the description of love, which I have called a hymn, and which might be called a Pindaric ode, were it not so self-possessed and so rational ; which might be called a philosophical summary of the whole Gospel, were it not too spiritual and too sublime for such a cold designation. In this description, Paul, most eloquent of men, declares all eloquence, human or angelic, to be a hollow sound, if not inspired by love ; Paul, the man of insight, the close, compact reasoner, the profound theologian, the acute disputant, says that the mightiest intelligence is but an empty shell, if love is not there to give it substance ; Paul, who teaches with such fervor that we are justified by faith, here looks down from a summit higher than faith, asserting that every degree of faith, without love, is a vain illusion ; and Paul, the man of practical religion, who fills his epistles with exhortations to good works, now says, in face of the teaching of the whole church,

past and future, that we may give all we have to the poor, and die the death of a martyr to the truth, in devouring flame, but that without love these sacrifices are dead and useless.

Next, he describes love in its manifestations: showing how it takes the place and does the work of every virtue. It operates as patience, "suffering long," and continuing "kind" in the face of provocation. It works as humility, "not envying, not vaunting itself, not puffed up" with conceit or vanity. It produces good behavior, "not behaving itself unseemly." It is calmness and self-possession amid insults, "not easily provoked." It is candor and generosity in judgment, "thinking no evil" of others. It is love of truth, it is hope, it is endurance, "rejoicing in the truth, bearing all things, believing all things, hoping all things, enduring all things." Thus, he who loves fulfils the whole law.

Dr. Franklin, wishing to cultivate good habits and educate himself to virtue, made out a list of faults which he desired to correct, and virtues he wished to acquire, and took them up one by one. That was well; but he found it difficult. An easier as well as a more satisfactory way is once for all to give the heart to God and man in love, and then all virtues grow out of this affection as the parts of a plant grow out of the seed. When you have the seed of a rose, you have potentially the stalk of a rose, the leaf of a rose, the blossom and fruit of a rose. So, whenever we are living in a spirit of love to God and man, we

have in us the rudiments and germs of whatever else is true, noble and good.

And one more pre-eminence Paul assigns to love over knowledge, eloquence and prophecy. All these change and pass. All thought is relative, all opinion is for a time, all the beliefs of man alter with the advancing years. We see nothing now as our ancestors looked at it; nothing as we saw it ourselves when we were children. But, amidst this flux and flow of things, where all is so fleeting, where everything comes and goes and our life seems like a dream or a brief tale, some things within us are more immovable than the unmoving stars. If we have love in our heart, that shall endure when the pyramids are worn into sand, when the stars shall cease to shine, and this green earth becomes a dead mass like the cold moon above it. Trust in God will never die; hope for a great good will never fail; and, above all, love, which is God's own immortal essence; this, greatest of all, shall endure from eternity to eternity.

Thus speaks the prophetic heart of the great Apostle, and thus he lifts all our spirits into communion with his own.



## CHAPTER XV.

### PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF DIVINE DECREES.

OUR next question is — Did Paul teach the Calvinistic doctrine of Divine Decrees ?

The central doctrine of Calvinism, the root out of which the rest came, is that of the absolute sovereignty of God. God is supreme will ; his will governs all events ; his will is the law of the universe. He is just, in the way he chooses to be just. He does what he chooses to do, and what he chooses to do is right. He does not choose to do anything because it is right, but it is right because he chooses to do it. Man's duty is to adore, accept, submit and obey. What seems to us wrong may be right to God. There is nothing common between his goodness and ours ; goodness, justice, truth, right, are nothing in themselves ; they are not rooted in the nature of the universe, nor even in the nature of God, but only in the will of God. If he should choose to make wrong right he could do so, or else his power would be limited by his character. He would be unable to do what he pleased, if he were obliged to obey a law, even a law of his own nature.



Thus Calvin says:<sup>1</sup> "The Divine Will is the cause of everything that exists. . . . The will of God is the highest rule of justice ; so that what he wills must be considered just, for this very reason, because he wills it. When it is asked ' why the Lord did so,' the answer must be, ' Because he willed it.' " Calvin, indeed, denies that God's will is an arbitrary one, but still maintains that God owes nothing to man, and that man has no right to object to anything that God may do, no matter how unjust it seems. From this fundamental principle of God's absolute sovereignty, Calvin logically proceeds to the conclusion that God has from the beginning predestined and ordained some angels and men to eternal life, and has ordained others to eternal death ; and this without regard to goodness or character. He admits that it is a " horrible decree," but claims that it is taught in the Word of God, and that we must accept it as right, no matter how unjust it may seem. The sum of it is that before God created the world he decreed the fall of Adam and of all his posterity, and of this mass, so corrupt by birth and without any choice of their own, he determined some, before they were born, to hell, and some to heaven. In other words, he created some men to be damned, and others to be saved. The Assembly's Catechism, the creed of the Presbyterian churches in Great Britain and America, follows Calvin in this. With its usual frankness, it states the doctrine in seven articles, of which this is one : —

<sup>1</sup> Institutes, Book iii, c. 22, § 2.

“By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained unto everlasting death.” The articles go on to say that those whom God determined to save, out of his mere grace, without foresight of faith, or good works, or any goodness of theirs, he proceeds to call, justify, and save. The rest of mankind he is pleased to pass by, and ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice.

The question is, whether any such doctrine is taught in the New Testament. If taught anywhere, it is taught by Paul. If taught by him anywhere, it is to be found in the eighth and ninth chapters of Romans. Let us, then, see what Paul really says.

When we first read these chapters, coming to them with our minds full of the Calvinistic doctrine of election, as just stated, there is no doubt that they seem to teach that doctrine. For example, Paul says:—

“For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil,—that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth,—it was said unto Rebecca, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.” (Rom. ix. 11–13.)

“For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God

that sheweth mercy. For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." (Rom. ix. 15-18.)

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." (Rom. ix. 21-23.)

Here Paul plainly teaches that God has chosen, before they were born, certain persons for good, and others for evil; that he has mercy on some, and hardens others; that he loved Jacob, and hated Esau; that it is not what the man himself chooses or wills, but what God gives him, that enables him to fulfil his calling and election.

All this, you will say, looks very much like the Calvinistic doctrine of election; and, if that is what Paul meant, let us admit it.

So also say I. I do not wish to force his language to mean what I believe. But before we decide that Paul was a Calvinist before Calvin, let us be sure of one point, namely, Was he here speaking of a *temporal*, or an *eternal* election; of a choice for this life, or for

the future life ; of temporal privilege and opportunity, or eternal rewards and punishment ? This is the main question to be settled.

And before we ask whether Paul taught that “ horrible doctrine,” let us first consider whether there is any truth mixed with the falsehood, and if so, what part of the doctrine is true and what part false.

To say that God created some men to be damned, without regard to their conduct, is not only contrary to the instincts of justice which he himself has planted in our souls, but also contrary to the most essential and vital teachings of Christ. The Gospel teaches that God “ will have all men to be saved ;” that he loves his enemies and seeks to bless them ; that Christ died for all. Now, it is a contradiction to say that God wishes to save those whom he has created to be damned ; that he asks men to do good and be good, who have no power of being so and doing so ; that he punishes men for sins which they cannot help ; that he rewards them for goodness which is not theirs. All this would make a mockery of the largest part of the New Testament. It is therefore certain that the law of God in the heart, and the word of God in the Gospel, equally declare this doctrine of Election and Reprobation to be false, and if Paul teaches it, he teaches what is not true.

But, though the doctrine thus stated is false, there is also a true doctrine of Divine Foreordination to good and to evil. It is ordination to privileges and opportunities in this life — not to eternal bliss or

ruin. The doctrine of Temporal Predestination is one thing; the doctrine of Eternal Predestination is quite another. Men are not equally free to be and do what they will. They cannot determine where they shall be born; God determines that. They cannot determine what kind of an organization, physical, mental, moral, they shall bring into the world; God determines that. Some men are born to great opportunities, others to few. But every one is to be judged according to what he has, not what he has not. To whom much is given, of him will much be required; to whom little is given, of him will little be asked. To all this we can submit, knowing that God will, in his own good time, make it all right. This kind of predestination makes the variety of the world, the gradations and order of existence, in which every man has his separate place and work, but each necessary to the perfect whole.

The question, then, is, "What doctrine of Predestination did Paul teach — temporal or eternal? ordination to opportunities here, or to everlasting bliss and to everlasting misery hereafter?" I answer that it can be easily shown that Paul taught Election and Predestination for time — not for eternity.

The principal place where Paul teaches the doctrine of Predestination is in Romans viii.-x. But neither in this place nor in any other does he teach the doctrine laid down by Calvin and the Assembly's Catechism, that God has "predestined some men



to everlasting life, and foreordained some to everlasting death."

The word translated "predestinate" (*προορίζω*) occurs in four places only in Paul's writings.

1. Romans viii. 29, 30: "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born of many brethren."

Paul does not here say, we observe, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to eternal life hereafter;" but, "to be conformed to the image of his Son" here. The purpose of God was that those whom he knew to be fitted for it and ready for it should become like Christ, and have something of Christ's spirit in them.

2. The second place where this word is used is in 1 Cor. ii. 7, where Paul says: "We speak a divine wisdom, even the hidden wisdom which God foreordained before the ages . . . which God revealed to us by his spirit." This, also, is not anything foreordained for eternity, but foreordained to be revealed in time.

3. The third passage is Eph. i. 5. Here Paul declares that "the God and Father of Jesus Christ has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places with Christ, having chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blame before him, having in love predestinated us unto the adoption of children in Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will."



This, we must perceive again, is not any predestination to eternal life hereafter, but to spiritual blessings here.

4. The fourth passage is in the same chapter, and simply states that "according to God's good pleasure, which he purposed in himself, to gather in one all things in Christ, we have also obtained an inheritance, being predestinated by him who works all things according to the counsel of his own will, to be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ, and were sealed by the spirit which Jesus promised." This, also, was something predestined to take place here, and not in any future life.

From this it appears that, so far as the use of this word "predestinate," or "foreordain," is concerned, it in every instance is applied to what takes place in this world, and not in the other.

Let us see how it is with the words "elect," "election," or "chosen," (*ἐκλεκτός, ἐκλογή*).

These words were first used in regard to the Israelites, who were God's "chosen" or "elect" people. They were chosen for a work, — to be the teachers of the divine law to the world; to be teachers of the unity of God. They were not elected to an everlasting heaven in another world, but for duties and service and privileges here. This word "chosen" is applied a multitude of times in the Old Testament to the Jews as a nation: "I have made a covenant with my chosen." "O ye seed of Abraham, ye children of Israel, his chosen." Moses told the Israelites,

"Thou art a holy people unto the Lord; the Lord hath chosen thee a special people unto himself above all people." "Jacob, my servant, and Israel, mine elect."

The use of the word "chosen," or "elect," began at this time. It is used throughout the Old Testament to mean God's choice of the Jews to be his elect people in this world, and certainly has nothing to do with a future life.

Down to the coming of Christ the Jews were the chosen nation; after that, all who became Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, were the chosen people. But it does not follow that all who were chosen were faithful to the end, or that all would be chosen in the other world. Jesus said, "Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" Judas was one of the elect till he fell. To be chosen was not enough; it was necessary to "give diligence to make one's calling and election sure."

"Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate." Nations and men are predestined to a certain work, and those are predestined to that work whom God knows beforehand to be fit for it. They are elected not to rewards, but to duties. The Israelites were elected to the duty of preaching a pure faith to mankind. When, instead of that, they became hardened in ritual and ceremonies, Sabbath-keeping and sacrifices, so as to reject Jesus, the most divine teacher of truth, then they lost their election as a people—all except those of them who were fitted

and ready to accept this larger religion, this higher gospel.

Paul saw a providence in all things; to him nothing was accidental, nothing unforeseen. Everything served God's purpose, and sooner or later fulfilled his end,—if not in one way, then in another. When the Jews ceased to be God's special people, then their fall opened the way for all the other nations to become God's people. When Pharaoh was obstinate, and would not let the Children of Israel go, then he served God by his obstinacy. If he had allowed them to go and worship in the wilderness, they would have come back to Egypt and been slaves again; but by his breaking his promises they were freed from their obligations, and escaped altogether. According to Paul, God foresaw that Pharaoh would be obstinate, and so selected him to be king of Egypt at that time. "God hardened his heart." That is true, since the primal qualities of our organization come to us under the direction of Providence. Every man is born with special advantages and disadvantages; he has good qualities, and he has the defects of those qualities. If he is firm, he is apt to be obstinate; if he is good-natured, he is apt to be too yielding. God governs the world by the faults and vices of men, no less than by their virtues. But all this belongs to the present life, not to the future. Pharaoh's hard heart served a good purpose here; but it is nowhere said that Pharaoh was to be punished for it hereafter.

Here are two brothers ; we will call them Esau Brown and Jacob Brown. When they were boys, Esau was careless, generous, brave ; he did not learn his lessons very well, but he was a great favorite with the other boys. He often got them into scrapes, but he never betrayed them. He honestly owned up, and took the punishment himself. He was a great plague at home, and his mother did not love him as much as she loved Jacob. Jacob was always ready to help her about the house ; he was thoughtful and careful. He brought his mother little presents on her birthday ; but Esau, though he loved her, never remembered to do anything of the sort. Jacob used to trade with his companions, and had a money-box full of half-dollars and dimes. At last, as they grew to be young men, Esau got into a serious scrape, and his father scolded him severely. Then he concluded to go West, but had no money to go with, and Jacob offered to give him two hundred dollars if Esau would sign away his share in their father's property ; and he did so.

Jacob Brown went into business, and became a prosperous man, and when he died, left half a million dollars to the Hospital for Women and Children. Esau Brown moved from Ohio to Iowa, from Iowa to California, and from California to Oregon, and never seemed to accomplish much in any place ; and when he died, he left his widow and children to the care of his brother, who, I am glad to say, made them comfortable. Then people said, "What a mysterious

Providence, that the Lord should have done so much better for Jacob Brown than for Esau Brown, when, really, Esau was as good-hearted a man as you ever saw, and Jacob was a little close." And Rev. Moses Gilead, preaching the funeral sermon, took his text from the first chapter of Malachi, second verse, "Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord; yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his heritage waste." But the real truth of the matter was that Jacob Brown was prosperous, not because he was good, but because he was prudent, industrious, economical, and had good business habits. The Lord did not really love him more than he loved his brother. The Lord did not elect him to everlasting life in the other world, but he elected him to be the man to endow the Women's Hospital in this world; and to be able to do that was something.

Just so the Lord elected the Patriarch Jacob and his descendants, the Jews, to establish the doctrine of monotheism in the world. He elected them to teach mankind faith in God, as a Ruler, Judge, and Personal Providence. The Jews were like their father, Jacob. They inherited from him his undoubting faith in one God, *his* God, and the God of his children. They inherited his pacific habit, his tendency to trade rather than to war, his tenacity to his convictions, his sagacity and knowledge of men. Therefore they were the right people to receive and preserve the Mosaic Law, and that has been their business in the world. They were the chosen people;



chosen for *that* because their character fitted them for that. They were not chosen to possess an exclusive heaven hereafter, but to do a special work here. They were chosen, elected, predestinated for this work when they were born, and before they were born. They were chosen when they were so constituted as to be the right persons to do the work. When the Lord made them so, he chose them. Their election and calling was written in their organization, in the fibre of their brains, and the temper of their characters.

The whole argument of Paul about election and predestination in the ninth and tenth chapters of Romans refers to this world and the present life.

The Jews had been trained up by their prophets and teachers to believe that they were God's chosen people,—elect according to the foreknowledge of God. "How, then, if we were elected," said they, "could God set us aside, and choose a people from among all nations?" That was the argument that Paul had to meet.

You perceive that if election were an unconditional and absolute thing, Paul could not have answered it; the question would be unanswerable. According to the Calvinistic view of election there was no reply. But according to the true view the answer was easy. Those whom God foresees to be fitted for a work, he elects or chooses to do it. If they are willing to do it, they make their election sure. Then he helps them with all the power they need.



He fills their soul with faith; he causes them to triumph over all obstacles; he brings them from grace to glory. But if they refuse to do the work they are set aside. It was no merit of theirs that they were chosen, so they have no right to complain.

"Here is a lump of clay," says Paul. "The potter can make of it what he will. He takes a part of it, no better than the rest, and makes a finely wrought cup or plate, carefully finished, which will be long preserved, and used on great occasions. That is a vessel of honor, fitted for preservation. He takes another part of the lump, no worse than the first, and makes of it a coarse mug or dish, sure to be broken in a short time. That is a vessel fitted for destruction. But each is necessary. In a great house there must be vessels of honor and of dishonor. This is a great house in which we live; so some men are chosen for high places and great offices, and others for common ones. What of that? If God chooses us for any work, however humble, shall we complain? In whatever place we are we can be doing God's work."

And here I think we can see the explanation of one difficult passage (Romans ix. 22): "What if God," says Paul, "willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction, and to make known the riches of his glory to the vessels of mercy prepared for glory, called from both Jews and Gentiles?" That this word "wrath" does not imply

anger in any common sense, appears from the fact that God is said "to show his wrath by enduring, with much long-suffering, the vessels of wrath, only fit to be destroyed." God's showing his wrath means letting the evil consequences of sin be made known. "You Jews," Paul means to say, "consider the Gentiles to be vessels of wrath, fit to be destroyed. What if God has guarded and kept them by his long-suffering providence to show that when you, the Jews, refuse to accept Christ, he may show his power over the lump by choosing the obedient, both of Jews and Gentiles, to be vessels of honor in his house, and show that he punishes evil, by degrading the disobedient Jews from their high position?" Still, here, as before, it is election and reprobation to opportunities and privileges in this world, not to any rewards or punishments hereafter.

It may be observed that when Nature has any important work to do, she always adds a little surplus force, more than is actually necessary, so allowing for loss by friction or waste. In making the Jewish race, she gave them a little too much tenacity. She put into them such immobility, such indifference to the opinions and habits of those around, such calm satisfaction with their own, that it became at last national pride and contempt for the outside world. They thought the Lord cared for no other nation but themselves; they were his favorites; the rest of the world were outcasts and aliens. Wherever they went, throughout the Roman Empire, they carried

this proud and calm self-confidence. "We have Abraham to our father," said they. "Jehovah is our God, and he is the only true God. The Gods of the Gentiles are idols, and will be dashed in pieces like a potter's vessel." These poor Jews stood in the Roman Forum looking at the magnificent temple of the Capitoline Jupiter, and laughed with contempt at its worship. In Athens, they gazed at the Parthenon, ascending in its perfect beauty, and their language and lips betrayed the supreme scorn with which they regarded this idolatry. They repaid the contempt of the nations among whom they lived with a contempt more lofty than their own.

The Jewish Christians brought into Christianity this same feeling of superiority, this sense of their own exclusive rights. Their religion was still steeped in this Jewish bigotry. Their Christianity, with all the Mosaic rites continued, with its Jewish Sabbath, circumcision and law, was the only true church founded by God; out of that there was no salvation. Christianity, with them, was only Judaism further developed and unfolded, with a Jewish Messiah at its head. "No one can be saved," said they, "but by becoming a Jew. Out of the Jewish church, no salvation."

This was the exclusive spirit with which Paul had to fight all his life, and which sometimes almost broke him down. We have seen him as the great preacher of liberal Christianity, — the mighty forerunner of Martin Luther and Calvin and Knox, of

Savonarola and Wickliffe, of Channing and Theodore Parker. He founded the Broad Church, and when men wish to battle with bigotry and ecclesiastical pretension, with priestcraft and churchism, they will find half their work done for them by the apostle Paul.

And now we see how he used this doctrine of election in his battle for freedom of spirit, and what a weapon it was in his hands for beating down the strongholds of Jewish bigotry.

The fundamental religious conviction in the Jewish mind was this: "The Lord reigns." Neither chance nor fate, neither blind force, dead law, nor human will governs the world. "The Lord reigns." Therefore justice, wisdom, and love reign; then all things are working together for good. The events of time proceed according to a divine plan, the working of which man may delay, but cannot prevent.

The Jewish Christians said to Paul, "Is not our nation the elect nation, the chosen people? And will God cast us off?"

Paul met them on their own ground, and appealed to their own faith in Providence. "Yes," replied he, "the Jews *are* a chosen nation, elected from all mankind for a work by which all men are to be blessed. We were not chosen for our own sake or for Abraham's sake, but for the sake of mankind. When we *do* our work, then we are God's chosen people, not otherwise. Though perhaps we may even still be doing God's work, when in our obstinacy we refuse

to do it; as Pharaoh did God's work indirectly, when he refused to let the people go. If you refuse to receive the universal church, in which there are neither Jews nor Greeks, then you cease to be the children of Israel, and become like the Egyptians, and are persecuting God's people. Can not God do as he will, and 'call those his people who were not his people, and those his beloved who were not his beloved?' The Jewish people are like a lump of clay in the hands of the potter; of those who are willing to follow God's divine methods and join this universal church, he makes vessels of honor; of those who resist it, he makes vessels of dishonor. You say, 'We are the children of Abraham, therefore we are all God's favorites; he loves us and hates the Gentiles.' But of Abraham's children only Isaac was chosen to be the father of the holy people; and of Isaac's children only Jacob, not Esau. Was not Esau a child of Abraham? and yet is written, 'Esau have I hated.'

"Has not God a right to have mercy on the Gentiles, and have compassion on Greeks and Romans, and bring them all into the universal church, where there is neither Jew nor Greek? Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were chosen and raised up, not for their own sake, nor for your sake, but for the sake of this universal church which has been called out of darkness into light. Do you think there is no providence in all this? Is it an accident that all these Greeks and Romans have given up Jupiter and Pallas-Athene,



and now worship Jehovah through his son Jesus of Nazareth? Yes, the Lord's parable has been fulfilled; you Jews refused to come to this great marriage feast of the nations, this festival of the whole world, and the Lord has sent out into the byways and hedges and compelled the Gentiles to come in, that his house might be filled. This was God's plan and purpose from the beginning. When he made chaos, he put into it the seeds of this mighty future."

The doctrine of election, then, does not refer to the other world at all, except indirectly. It refers to this world, and we can see how true it is. If we believe in God at all, we must believe in his providence; and if we believe in his providence at all, we must believe that he elects and chooses us, each and all, for some work, some purpose, some end. Our life means something to God and to the race, as well as to ourselves. We are called and chosen, and we must give diligence to make our calling and election sure. We serve God either way, by doing our work or by refusing to do it. Only, in the one case we become vessels of honor; in the other, vessels of dishonor. In the one case we are Moses; in the other, Pharaoh; but Moses and Pharaoh both served the Lord.

People say, "God does not interfere; he governs the world by laws. There is no special providence at all." God governs by laws, but he *governs*. It is a law of God's government, that when a man has absolute power, like Pharaoh, and uses it only for his own purposes, his heart at last becomes so proud



and obstinate that he *cannot* do what he knows he ought to do. By the working of that law God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and the hard heart of Pharaoh did infinite good. If he had been a kind and just ruler, and had allowed the Israelites to go out and worship, they would have remained the serfs of the Egyptians, and Palestine would never have come into history. But Pharaoh's obstinacy was the cause of their emancipation. Just so God hardened the hearts of the slaveholders. By the working of the same law, their self-indulgence in the use of absolute power made it at last impossible for them to give up any of it to save the rest. They could not accept the situation. They could not consent to be second where they had been first. If they had accepted gracefully the Presidency of Lincoln, and allowed slavery to be excluded from the territories, slavery might then have continued in the States for another hundred years. But the laws of human nature made this course impossible, and the operation of these laws hardened their hearts. So too, by the working of the laws of trade the North resisted emancipation. Both North and South refused to serve the Lord directly, by helping the cause of emancipation and freedom; so they served him by their obstinacy, and helped the cause *indirectly*, by refusing to emancipate. God, by his laws, hardened their heart, just as he hardened the heart of Pharaoh.

In this consists our freedom, and only in this. We cannot resist the Divine purpose, or prevent God's

plans from being accomplished for the progress of mankind. We *must* serve God, directly or indirectly. If we serve him directly, by our obedience, then we are like the clay which the potter takes from the lump, out of it to make a beautiful vase, a vessel of honor, with which to adorn the mansion of its owner. If we refuse to obey, then we are like the clay out of which he makes the vessels for baser purposes ; which, when used, are broken and thrown away, vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction.

Our freedom, however, seems to go further. By resisting God's will, and refusing to obey his truth in our conscience, we can postpone for a long time the result which he intends. God endures, with much long-suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction. He allows us plenty of time. He is not impatient. He possesses eternity ; time he allots to human freedom.

Thus, if the Jews had accepted Jesus as their Messiah, the world would have been saved centuries of misery. They would have become God's missionaries to mankind, teaching peacefully to Greeks and Romans the doctrines of universal love. If Jesus had lived thirty years longer, with the whole educated force of his nation as his disciples, making the Temple at Jerusalem the centre and radiant focus of the worship of truth and love, then he might in person have inaugurated the reign of peace on the earth. But they put him to death at the very beginning of his great ministry, and his work was left in the hands of a few

disciples, — good men, but not comprehending their master ; and so centuries must pass before his gospel could be fully known and obeyed.

The common notion of Election, then, is false. God does not elect men to everlasting happiness hereafter, but to usefulness here. He elects us to opportunities. He elects us to privileges, which we may use or neglect to use. To some men he gives five talents, to others two, to others one ; their business is to use the talents given to them.

God loved Jacob by giving him an opportunity, not because he was better than Esau, but because he was different, having the qualities necessary for his work. He loved the Jews in the same way, by giving them opportunities. They had the oracles of God committed to their care. They had the covenants, and the law, and the promises, and the fathers, and, most of all, among them appeared that wonder of the world, Jesus of Nazareth. The human race flowered out into its choicest blossom among their Syrian hills. They were the guardians of monotheism in its bud ; they were to possess the fragrance of the opening flower.

The Greeks were also a chosen people, — chosen to develop Beauty, in art, in literature, in sculpture, and in song. As the Jews were chosen to develop the highest type of human religion for the benefit of mankind, so the Greeks were chosen to develop Beauty, the Romans to develop Law. While nations do their appropriate work, they thrive ; when they leave it for something else, they fail.

Every Christian denomination has its own work, for which it was ordained by God ; but this is for the benefit of all. When it becomes denominational and exclusive, and thinks to absorb all others into itself, then it ceases to make its calling and election sure. As parties and sects do their work, they attract love and sympathy to that, and they grow strong. Then they are apt to forget their duty, and seek their own glory ; and thus they come to an end.

The Roman Catholic Church, to-day, is repeating the error of the Jews. It claims to be the only true church of God, just as the Jews claimed to be. The Jewish nation was scattered and destroyed because of this intolerance. Unless the Catholic Church consents to be liberalized and enlarged, it also must be fulfilled in something higher.

As God elects nations, so he elects individuals, each for his own work. God elected Columbus to discover America ; he elected Milton to write *Paradise Lost* ; he elected Newton to discover the laws of the universe, and Washington to create a nation. If Washington had devoted himself to writing sonnets, if Newton had sailed to discover the North Pole, if Milton had gone into trade, they would not have made their calling and election sure. But they were wiser, and each abode in the calling to which he was called. Napoleon was sent to organize liberty in Europe ; had he devoted his immense ability to that, Europe would have free institutions, to-day. But he sought, egotistically, to build up his own dynasty ; so he came to a disgraceful end.

God has chosen us all for a work ; he has elected us and predestined us, before the foundation of the world, to have a share in the advancement of humanity. If we cease from our selfishness and egotism, and consent to do the work for which he has made us, then we make our election sure.

And if we all have our mission, a mission determined by the nature and the powers God has given to each of us, how much more evident must it be that Jesus was appointed and raised up for a great and special work ; that God sent his son into the world that the world through him might be saved ! And yet his obedience was not passive or mechanical, but free. He said, "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do."

God calls us each in his providence to different works and duties. Every calling of God is true and noble. There are three steps in this calling. We are chosen, first, to Christian usefulness ; secondly, to Christian goodness ; thirdly, to Christian glory.

The substance and meaning, therefore, of Paul's doctrine of Election is this : The births of time, the events of history, the great religions of the world, do not come accidentally, but by a Divine providence. But what God gives to each man, to each nation, to each church, to each party, is not for its own use and glory, but for the good of all. When it monopolizes its privileges and keeps them for itself, it will lose them. If it buries its talent in the earth, instead of using it for the general good, the talent will be taken



away. The man, the church, the party, which exalts itself, shall be abased. Meantime, while this doctrine of Election, as used by Paul, strikes down bigotry and exclusiveness on one side or the other, it encourages and uplifts the humble and the discouraged. It says to them, "God has chosen the weak things of this world to confound the mighty, and the ignorant things of this earth to confound the wise, and base things of this earth hath God chosen. Yea, and things that are not, to confound things that are." It says to them, as Paul said to the Ephesians, "God has chosen you in Christ before the foundation of the world *to be holy and without blame before him in love.*" He has predestined you to become *his children* by faith in Jesus Christ. He has not chosen you, or elected you to a passive happiness hereafter, but to an active goodness here, "to be holy and without blame," to live as his children, to be to the praise of his glory, to belong to his universal church, when "he shall gather together all things in Christ, both things on earth and things in heaven," when "every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

This doctrine, so looked at, is one which applies to all time, and is good for all time. It teaches us patiently to bear our trials, and not to murmur at the inequalities of life. God knows best, and it is for him to choose what we are to be and do here. If others have better opportunities than we, or higher privileges, it is not that God loves them



better, but that he has chosen them for one work and us for another. If the life of one is all sunshine, and that of another all storms, it is not that God is partial, or that one is his favorite. He knows what is in us all; he foresees what is best for us all; he chooses me for this low office, he chooses you for that high one; but we are all equally dear to him. If we do well the work he gives us to do, if we bear patiently the trials he sends to us, then we shall at last see what he means. He has predestined us all to be conformed to the image of his Son; that is the universal election. Some will be conformed to the image of Christ on the glad and sunny and sweet side of his character and career, the Christ who walked with his disciples over the grassy plains of Galilee during the long, happy days, when all was prosperous and hopeful. Some will be conformed to the image of Christ by sharing his hard labors, by descending with him into the bitterness of disappointment, the gloomy hour of loneliness when all forsook him; by feeling with him the crown of thorns and the sharp nails of the cross.

Let us read the heroic and glowing words with which Paul sets forth this high argument: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." All who love God have been called by him. Love, trust, hope, are the marks of their divine election; and while we love God, all things will concur in good for us, "For whom he

did foreknow, he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren." Christ does not desire to go up alone into a solitary glory; he wishes only to be the first-born of many brethren, all having his likeness and image. God intends to make as many of us to be like Christ as are willing, and so to be his brethren and sisters. That is predestination.

"Whom he did predestinate, them he has also called." This was something that had already happened. To those who had been taught the gospel, and heard about Jesus, this message came as a divine call to grow up with him, to become like him. Let us see it in the same way. Every time we behold the beauty of holiness in the Master, his tender, patient love, his unfaltering trust, let us hear in our heart the low call of God's spirit saying, "Be ye also like him!"

"And whom he has called them also he has justified." With this sense of heavenly invitation comes the sense of pardon and peace. If God calls us, his pardon comes in the very call. That is pardon, that God wishes us to become like Christ.

"And whom he has justified them he has also glorified." But this also is something which has already been given to them; therefore it is not a future heavenly glory, but a present heavenly glory. It is the glory of those who let the light of their good works shine before men; it is the glory which

the vine has in bearing its grapes, which the faithful servant has in doing his work well. It is not earthly, but heavenly glory; not the glory of outward fame and distinction, but it is giving out light, warmth, perfume, comfort, from a soul made rich in these gifts.

This, then, is the doctrine of election according to Paul. It is being chosen by God for some good work, chosen to an opportunity, chosen to be his child, and the friend and brother of Jesus Christ. To this we are all elected, predestinated, called. Let us give diligence to make this calling and election sure.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE LAST THINGS.

**I**N 1 Cor. xv. 24., after arguing for the ascent of all souls into a higher life, the conquest of all evil here, and the overthrow of the last enemy, Death, Paul cries out, "Then, the end!"

The translators of our Testament have here inserted the word "cometh," which rather weakens the force of the words. "Then, the end" expresses better the Apostle's awe before the great panorama of future events which slowly rose before his mind. These events are called, in theological language, "The Last Things;" and the doctrine concerning them is "The Doctrine of the Last Things," or, "Eschatology."

The old view of prophecy assumed that it was a miraculous violation of the laws of the human mind, by which a knowledge of future earthly events was communicated. Prophecy was regarded as so foreign from natural human experience that the fulfilment of the prediction proves that God must have directly interposed to put this foreign knowledge into the mind, as a gardener may put the scion of a pear-tree on the stock of a quince, or a plum on an apricot.

But the new view of prophecy assumes that it is no violation of the laws of the intellect, but an intense activity of powers usually latent or imperfectly developed. It is insight of the present, which gives foresight of the future. He who sees deeply into principles can foresee their unfolding into that which is to be. Jesus sometimes used the phrase, "The hour cometh, and now is." This is the key to prophecy. The future is in the present, as the oak is in the acorn; therefore he who really knows the "hour which now is" can predict "the hour which cometh." Thus Columbus, being familiar with the geography of the Eastern Hemisphere, foresaw that by going west he would come to that continent again. In a previous chapter, in considering Christ's foresight of the fall of Jerusalem, we illustrated his prophetic gift by a similar insight in Dr. Channing, who foresaw that in case of Southern secession, the whole North would be united to put it down. In like manner, he predicted the actual danger which attended emancipation. He said, "I do not believe that the emancipated slaves will assassinate their masters, as many predict, for they are by nature too affectionate and too submissive a race for this; but I foresee that the masters will refuse to give them equal rights as fellow-citizens, which will be an evil to both races." Thus the seer, a man who looks into the present, becomes a prophet, and is able to look into the future.

"Is prophecy, then," some may ask, "only the exercise of common sagacity?" No; but of uncommon

sagacity. It is a human sagacity made divine by a heavenly influence. Inspiration does not create the faculty of foresight, but develops it in a high degree. The prophet, under the influence of this divine power, foresees what to others is unseen. Therefore the prophet is often disliked and hated, stoned and persecuted, because he announces coming woes and punishments. He is called a fanatic and a madman; he "troubles Israel;" he disturbs the slumbers and the comforts of those who only care for the present. When he speaks of the judgment to come, Felix trembles, and says, "At a more convenient season I will listen to thee."

The "last things," according to Paul, are "the coming of Christ," "the resurrection," the "judgment to come," and the "final complete triumph of good over evil."

The apostle Paul's inspiration led him to foresee the coming of Jesus as the Christ, to make a new heaven and a new earth. In that he foresaw the truth; for Christ has come, is coming, and will come more and more. From the hour of his resurrection, he began to come as king over the hearts and souls of men, and every age has made the brightness of Christianity more divine. Jesus is more the Christ to-day than he ever was before.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> William Henry Channing, writing to me from London, said that he attended a communion service in a Protestant church in London where, in the course of the forenoon, fifteen hundred persons partook of the sacrament; that Farrar's "Life of Christ"



The apostle Paul was right in foreseeing the coming manifestation (*parousia*) of Jesus as the Christ. But in his earliest letters written to the Thessalonians he looked for an outward, visible coming in the air, with audible sounds and accompanying marvels. Afterward, he dismissed these expectations, and speaks of sitting in heavenly places *now* with Christ Jesus; speaks of being already risen with him; speaks of Christ *within*, the hope of glory. His inspiration, which enabled him to foresee the essential truth, did not preserve him, for a time, from unessential error.

We have already mentioned that the Jewish belief concerning the coming of the Messiah divided time into two great periods, the age of Moses, and the age of Christ. The first they called the age which is now; the other, the age which is to come. These two ages, or æons, were both temporal, existing here on the earth. Very often we miss the meaning of a passage in the New Testament by not noticing this. When we read of "this world and the world to come," we imagine it to mean "this life and the future life;" but very often it simply means the present time and the time of the Messiah. "Be not conformed to this world" means "Be not conformed to the spirit of the present age." "The rulers of the darkness of this

had reached the thirtieth edition, and Geikie's the twentieth. "And yet," he added, "our *advanced* young friends think that the Christian religion is in its 'afterglow;' but to me it appears that the real glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ is just beginning to shine in its full splendor."

world " means " the principles which govern in this unenlightened period, before Jesus comes to reign over the mind." " The God of this world has blinded the minds " would be more intelligibly read, " The gods men worship in this age of darkness have blinded their minds." " That he might deliver us from the present evil world " would be better, " this present evil period." Other passages which are obscure become clear when thus read. For example, what is the sense of this, " These things are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world have come " ? But translate, " We who have arrived at the termination of the first, or Mosaic, age." " Now once, in the end of the world [this age], he hath appeared to put away sin." It has been inferred from such passages that the writers supposed that the outward, visible, physical world was soon to be destroyed, and that therefore they were in error ; whereas what was said in the last case was, " Now, at the end of the first age, he hath appeared to put away sin." Similar passages are : " Manifest in these last times ; " " In the last days perilous times shall come ; " " Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."

It has not only been supposed that the apostles were deceived in believing the end of the world very near, but that Jesus shared their mistake. A great many critics base their arguments against Christianity on this supposed error of Jesus and his apostles, in believing that the world was to come to an

end very soon ; and so it might seem according to the present translation.

It is reported by Matthew that Jesus, before his death, sitting on the Mount of Olives, was asked by his disciples, "What shall be the signs of thy coming and the end of the world?" He answers by giving a description of great suffering and misery, and says distinctly, "This generation shall not pass away till all this shall be fulfilled." According to this, it is argued that Christ evidently believed his coming and the end of the world close at hand ; therefore he was mistaken. But simply substitute for the question these words, "What are the signs of thy Messianic manifestation and the end of this age?" and the whole objection falls to the ground. Jesus was manifested as Christ before that generation had passed away. He did come in power and glory ; he did come to judge mankind ; he did divide the Gentiles into sheep and goats, setting the sheep on the right and the goats on the left ; attracting to himself the good and pure among Jews and Gentiles, and repelling the selfish and self-willed. He did come, amid the miseries of the Jewish rebellion, the horrors of captured Jerusalem, the dispersion of the Jews. When the age of Moses came to an end, then the kingdom of Christ began. Down to that time, Moses was the great religious leader of the human race. Since the fall of Jerusalem, Jesus has been the religious leader of mankind. That generation did not pass away till all was fulfilled. Thus the truth or

fallacy of a whole argument may depend on the right translation of a single word.

The coming of Jesus means not his outward, visible appearance, but his inward, invisible manifestation to the souls of men. That is the only way in which Jesus ever comes, or can come ; the only way in which he was ever manifested, or can be manifested. All else is figure, dress, outward form. The visible angels, the trumpet, the clouds of heaven, — these have nothing to do with the Christianity of Jesus. Christianity is in its essence an inward revelation ; its outward form is fugitive and changeable. It is Christ formed within us the hope of glory. The end of the world is the end of false doctrines, low conceptions of God, a merely outside religion of forms and ceremonies, sacrifices, Sabbaths, meats, washings, and a fixed mode of ritual. That ended with the destruction of Jerusalem. The old age terminated then. The new age of spiritual worship then began, when the true worshipper should worship the Father neither in Gerizim nor in Jerusalem, but everywhere, in spirit and in truth.

The next event, in "the last things," is the Judgment. That was to take place at the coming of Christ. Therefore, whenever Jesus comes to reign, in the soul, in the community, in human life, he comes to judge the world, to separate the sheep from the goats. This is the office of truth. Truth always judges, and separates right from wrong, good from evil.

There however arise new difficulties, according to

the old view ; which supposes an outward judgment, — a day of judgment ; all men collected after death in the other world. This theatrical assemblage of all men in one place and at one time is not in accordance with the new dispensation. “ We have not come to the mount which burned with fire, nor to blackness, nor darkness, nor tempest.” Jesus has two opposite statements about the judgment. He speaks of himself as the judge of men, and again he denies that he is to judge men. “ I am not sent,” he says, “ to judge the world, but to save the world. If any man does not obey me, I judge him not ; the word which I have spoken shall judge him at the last day.” This last day, a day of judgment, is the day when Christ’s word shall judge the secrets of men. The last day, the day of judgment to each of us, is the day when we cease to deceive ourselves, when we lay bare our souls to the truth, when we see ourselves as we are, and see God as he is. This day may come in this life or the next, but it must come to all, sooner or later. We all must be judged, because we all need to be judged ; because there is no peace, nor progress, nor heaven possible to us until we see the truth, and see ourselves in the light of that truth. Jesus teaches this judgment in that wonderful parable where he represents himself as sitting on the throne, and parting the sheep from the goats ; showing the self-deceivers who had said Lord, Lord, but had been hard-hearted and cold to their brethren, that they were goats, not sheep ; showing the Gentiles, those



who had never professed anything nor believed in him at all, that they were his real servants whenever they were unselfishly good. That is the essential thing in judgment ; all else is the accidental perishing form. What we need is to know ourselves, and judge ourselves by the truth. Whenever we do this, the Son of Man comes to judgment in our souls. Then our day of judgment arrives.

Paul taught this judgment to come. He said, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, whether they be good or bad ;" "In the day when God will judge the secrets of men ;" "The Lord will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts." Whether Paul believed or not in an outward, visible judgment, is of little consequence. The central, vital fact of judgment is just what he states it to be, making manifest the counsels of the hearts. I think it probable that Paul, at first, did take in a literal sense the sayings of Jesus concerning his sitting on a throne to judge the world, but that afterward he accepted the other word of Jesus, "I judge no man ; the word that I have spoken shall judge him at the last day."

This judgment is the source of future rewards and punishments. What reward do the saints ask or need, except to know that God loves them ; to see that they have been faithful in their few things ; to know that in helping others they have helped Christ



and his cause? That is the heavenly reward; not sitting on thrones, not being in an outward heaven of glory. It is a mean and unworthy view which seeks any higher heaven than the sense of God's infinite love, and the consciousness of doing and being what is right. And this comes from spiritual inward insight of the truth; this necessarily follows the day of judgment in each soul. In the parable of Jesus we read that "these shall go away into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal." It is the same word, "eternal," in both cases in the original. And eternal here means spiritual. The translation should be, "These shall go away into the sufferings of the eternal or spiritual world, and the righteous into the life of the spiritual or eternal world."

It is often said, and said truly, that our conscience requires that wickedness should be punished and that righteousness should be rewarded. But what kind of punishment and reward does the conscience require? Only this, I think, — that there shall be a righteous judgment; that all shams shall be exposed, all hypocrisy detected, all formalists and pretenders unmasked; that truth shall be vindicated; that cruel, worldly, selfish, mean men, who have passed themselves off for patriots or saints, shall be exposed, and made to see themselves as they are. Do we wish any other punishment for them than that? Is not that enough? Exposure in this world often causes death; makes men commit suicide. It is a dreadful thing to be brought to judgment when we have been

leading a false life, and have hardened ourselves in falsehood. But it is a necessary, wholesome, and benign punishment, in which we can believe, because it is for the good of those who are punished. It comes from God's love to the wicked man, because it is the best possible thing for him. It is "tribulation and anguish" for a time, but it is a wholesome tribulation and a healing anguish.

If you ask when this reward and punishment shall come, whether in this world or the next, I answer "in both." Christianity is one kingdom, here and hereafter. Its laws are the same in both worlds, its judgments and rewards the same. Those who are not judged here will be judged there. The Apostle says, "If we judge ourselves, we shall not be judged," — a very significant text, showing that he did not believe any outward, visible judgment necessary or essential. The one essential thing is that we shall see the truth, here and elsewhere. Somewhere we must see it; it is best to see it now, and to judge ourselves now.

The next point in Paul's teachings concerning "the last things" relates to the resurrection and the spiritual body. He asks (1 Cor. xv. 35), "How are the dead raised up, and in what body do they come?" This question is answered in the New Testament only by the apostle Paul, and by him only in one passage. The doctrine of the resurrection is taught throughout the New Testament; it is taught by Jesus, and by all the apostles; but the

resurrection of *the body* is only distinctly declared by Paul in this fifteenth chapter of Corinthians, though plainly referred to once or twice elsewhere.

In order to comprehend this remarkable chapter, — a chapter read so often, heard so often, and yet probably not always well understood, — let us first ask what is meant by “resurrection.”

The Jews, in the time of Christ, differed from the Greeks and Romans in this, that the majority of the Jews believed in a resurrection of the dead, — that is, in a *going up*, — while the Greeks and Romans believed in a going down. According to the Greeks and Romans, the shades of the dead were collected in an underground region, or Hades, where all wandered around, aimlessly and hopelessly, in a world so devoid of interest that Homer makes Achilles say that the lot of a ploughboy on earth is better than that of a king in that subterranean world. But the Jews believed in an ascent to a higher state, and this they called the “resurrection.” So Martha, “I know that my brother will rise in the resurrection.” The words translated “resurrection,” “rising again,” and the like, all mean, in the original, ascent, or rising up to a higher world. Instead of the dark and dismal underground world of the Pagan mythology, the Jewish religion — a religion of hope throughout, a religion which looked forward to a better life here and hereafter — this Jewish religion, in its orthodox form, as held by the Pharisees, taught a progress and rising up of the

human being after death. This is alluded to by Paul in his speech before the Sanhedrim, when he took advantage of this dispute between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and said: "Of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question this day." And again, before Felix, he declared his "*hope* toward God, which his opponents also allowed, that there should be a resurrection of the dead, both the just and unjust." The Jewish view of the hereafter was one of hope; that of the Gentiles one of fear.

It is very unfortunate that this word "resurrection" should have come to mean so generally only a coming back again to bodily life. Thus the resurrection of Jesus is supposed by most Christians to have been his coming back to his former bodily life, instead of his ascent into a higher one. Many passages in the New Testament show that the "resurrection of the dead" signifies their rising up into a better world than this.

Thus the Sadducees, who denied this doctrine of a higher life, asked Jesus (Matt. xxii. 23) concerning the woman who had seven husbands, "*In the resurrection, whose wife shall she be?*" — meaning, evidently, "In that higher life of which you speak, whose wife shall she be?" Jesus replied, "*In the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God.*" The "resurrection" here evidently does not mean merely the return of man from his grave into his former body,

but it means the higher condition both of soul and body hereafter.

So, too, in Luke (xx. 35), Jesus says, "They that shall be accounted worthy to attain that world, *and the resurrection of the dead*, are the children of the resurrection," — that is, belong by their character to that higher world.

It is also here intimated, as elsewhere, that the resurrection is a condition of degrees; that though there is a resurrection, or ascent, for all, both the just and unjust, yet that those who have done good go up into higher spiritual life, and those who have done evil into spiritual judgment. The good, so far as they have done good, see and know the love of God which dwells in them; the evil, so far as they have done evil, see and know the higher truth which judges them. We all shall rise into life, as far as we have done good; into judgment, as far as we have done evil. It is an ascent, for the bad, to go where he can see and know the truth, even though it condemns him. For the sight of truth lifts us to a higher plane, fills us with a fuller life, and is therefore resurrection and life. That is why Jesus said, "*I am the resurrection and the life*; he who believes in me" — that is, who has my faith — "does not die," — does not know death, but ascends into a higher life.

It is only in this sense that we can understand the saying of the Apostle, "If ye, then, be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above"



(Col. iii. 1). He regards all Christians as already partaking of the resurrection, as already having ascended with Christ into a higher world, where Jesus sits on the right hand of God, — that is, in the full sense of divine love. So, also, Paul tells the Ephesians (ii. 6) that God “had raised them up and made them sit in heavenly places with Jesus.” This, also, is what was meant by “the power of the resurrection” (Phil. iii. 10), “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death, if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” He evidently implies by “resurrection of the dead,” not merely a continued existence after death, but a higher life, in communion with Christ here and hereafter, — a higher life born out of suffering and death.

Paul, as we know, did not allude to the miracles of Jesus ; but he yet laid much stress on his resurrection, — so much that he said, “If Christ be not risen, our teaching is vain, and your faith is vain ; ye are yet in your sins.” But surely he did not thus value it merely as a display of power, or as a logical proof of a future life. “Christ is risen,” he elsewhere says, “for our justification,” — that is, to make us just, to give us the sense of God’s pardoning love, to lift us into communion with himself and his truth. The knowledge that Jesus had not gone down into an under world, but had gone up into a higher existence, from which he could send truth, joy, and peace into



the hearts of his disciples,—that he was near them still, loving them still, though so high above them,—this was the power of the resurrection, and this is the real power of the resurrection of Christ to-day. We still think of him as the ascended Master, who is yet near to us all, our friend, our helper, our dear brother. The joy of Easter morning is this, that he abolishes death by his ever-present spiritual life, by his continuing with his church, so that we can sit in heavenly places with him while we are yet in the earthly life, and hear his voice, “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

In this wonderful chapter on the future life, Paul begins with the historic facts of the death of Jesus, his burial, and his rising on the third day. He mentions the testimony of Peter, who saw him; of the twelve, who saw him; of five hundred others who saw him in Galilee; then of James, then of all the apostles again, and finally of Paul himself. Paul associates himself with those who saw the risen Master, but he certainly did not see him in his earthly body. Paul saw him in his ascended state, yet he classes himself with the witnesses to the resurrection. The ascended state then was the resurrection.

After recounting these facts, so well attested, of intercourse held with the risen Master, Paul says, “If this then is the universal testimony of the apostolic preaching, how can there be those among you in the Christian church who say that there is no such ascent of the dead into a higher life? For if

not, then Christ has not gone up; and if he has not gone up, then all our preaching is founded on error. We have no Master above, who is in heaven, and with God, but only a Master who has gone into the under world with the shades of the departed, with no power to help or save. But this is not so. Christ has gone up, the first of the vast Christian company who are to follow him and be with him. All die in Adam. As mortal men we must all die, but as those whom Christ has made alive, we shall go up with him, and be with him above." Those who said there was no resurrection did not probably deny immortality. If they had been unbelievers in that, they could hardly have become Christians. But they were Greeks, who could not believe in the resurrection, — that is, of soul and body, both going up into a higher life.

Then follows the passage in which Paul declares that the power of the Gospel shall at last conquer all sin, all evil, all unbelief, and that Jesus shall reign, as the Christ of truth and love, over all minds and hearts. And then, as if he foresaw that great heresy which would afterward make Christ equal with the Eternal and Infinite Power, he adds: "It is evident that God must remain supreme, and that the Son himself must be subject to him who did put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

Next comes the question of the body. What body shall souls have in the future life? On this point Paul is very clear.

1. First, in the future life we are not to be disembodied spirits, for this would be equivalent to being absorbed into the omnipresence of God. It is our bodily organization which makes us distinct and separate beings. By body we are located on a particular point of space and in a particular moment of time. We are in this place, not in all places; in this time, not in all time. We must be either somewhere, everywhere or nowhere. If we are nowhere, we do not exist at all; if we are everywhere, we are absorbed into God, and have no separate existence. To exist somewhere, so far as we can now understand, we must exist in connection with some bodily organization.

2. But this future body, according to Paul, is not the same sort of a body as that we now have, but a higher kind. He compares the body which we lay aside to a seed; the body with which we rise, to the plant which has grown out of the seed. We sow not the body which shall be, he says. We do not sow the oak, but the acorn; not the spreading vine, with its shoots and tendrils and clusters of grapes, but only a seed. As the seed is to the plant, so is the present body to that which is to come.

3. Yet in one sense it is the same body, for the principle of organization is the same. The principle of life in the seed is identical with that in the plant. Each seed has its own body. We cannot see the connection between the acorn and the oak, but we know that there is an unchanging law which binds

one to the other, so that by no possibility can an acorn produce an elm, or an apple seed unfold into a palm-tree. This principle is not material; no material tests can discover it. No chemistry can analyze the seed of wheat and detect the potency which makes it sure that it will not evolve into indian corn, or barley, or oats. There is also an invisible, immaterial principle which organizes the human body, and constitutes bodily identity. This will live on, and organize the future higher body, making it with all its difference identical with this. The resurrection of the body, therefore, is not that the same particles of matter are collected again out of the grave; for the identity of the body does not consist in its having the same material particles, but in its having the same organic principle.

4. Paul then proceeds to show the difference between the present and the future body. Following the distinction which makes man consist, not of two parts, soul and body, but of three, spirit, soul and body, he tells us that the present body is that in which soul rules, but the future will be one in which the spirit shall be supreme. The spirit is the highest power in man, which connects him with God and eternity, as the soul connects him with nature and the outward universe. Now, nature is more real to us than God; the finite more certain than the infinite. Hereafter, this will be reversed. In the future body, God will seem nearer than the outward world, just as he now seems nearer when we rise

into a spiritual state. When we are risen with Christ, we already are living in the spiritual body for that is now a part of man, only less developed than the soul. But there are moments in this life, high, heroic moments, hours of rapt devotion, hours of generous love and self-forgetfulness, when the spiritual body shines through its veil of flesh. It is this spiritual organization which supports the martyr at the stake, so that he does not seem to feel the flame; which enables the young man to die for his country; which looks from the eye in moments of adoring devotion; which thrills in the voice of that sublime eloquence before which all earthly resistance gives way. Then the spirit shows itself, and its bright features shine as through a crystal covering. Jesus was known to Mary by his voice of heavenly love; he was known to his disciples at Emmaus when he blessed the bread, because in similar moments before, when in his earthly body, this spiritual power had manifested itself. They remembered the Master's look and tone in the highest moments of his former life, and so recognized him again.

5. Paul then specifies more particularly the difference between the future body and the present. It is —

(a.) "Incorruptible," while this is corruptible. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption." This body is liable to disease, weakness, decay, death; the future body will be free from these limitations.



(b.) "It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory." The present human body has degenerated from its type. It has lost the grace, grandeur, beauty, which belong to it; such majesty and loveliness as we see in the Greek statues. But in the future life it will unfold into that radiant expression of energy and beauty which is its normal type.

(c.) "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power." Man's body is, in many ways, weaker than that of the animals around him. He cannot fly like the bird, nor swim like the fish, nor endure cold and heat as other animals; many creatures have keener senses; many are fleetier and stronger than he. But, hereafter, he may unfold higher powers, put forth new faculties, develop other senses; senses by which to perceive the nature of things, as he now perceives their phenomena; senses by which to penetrate into unknown worlds of beauty, wonder, and joy.

(d.) "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." The natural body (or soul body) is that in which soul rules; the spiritual body, that in which spirit is supreme. Here, we try to do right and often do wrong. The corruptible body weighs down the soul. Habits which are too strong for us, temptations addressed to tendencies which come from a corrupt past, often sweep us away. But there, the spirit shall rule, and the body gladly and sweetly serve it in all things.

This doctrine of the resurrection, as taught by Paul, seems to me more reasonable than to suppose, on the



one hand, that we are to return into the same material body we have had here, or, on the other hand, that we are to become at once disembodied spirits. It is in accordance with all modern science, which teaches that abrupt transitions are not the rule of nature, but rather gradual development. The soul of man may be developed more and more by passing through various forms, and as each body has done its work it drops from the soul, and then a higher organization is unfolded from within. So we climb, higher and higher, through endless reaches of creation, ever learning more of God and of his universe, ever communing more intimately with the Divine Spirit and the spirits of the good and great. All this is probable, and accords well with reason and with Scripture.

This view of the spiritual body will satisfy the feelings of those who cling so closely to the notion of a revival of the same material body we now have. That feeling is simply a dislike to the notion of disembodied spirits, with no means of communicating with nature or with other human beings, cut off from the wonders and varieties of the universe. This feeling is natural, and is expressed by Paul (2 Cor. v. 2), where he says, we "do not wish to be unclothed, but clothed upon;" not to be without body, but to have a higher body. "If the earthly house," he says, is dissolved, "we have a divine building to dwell in, eternal in the heavens; not a shifting tent, but an enduring home."

All this, it may be said, is only a theory. True; but if we inquire at all into the nature of the future life, we must choose one of two theories. In the future state we must either be disembodied spirits or embodied spirits. The objection to the first hypothesis is that, so far as we know, it would put an end to all communion with the outward universe, and be equivalent to absorption in God. There only remains the other alternative of a future body; that is, some organization by which we can come into communion with nature and other souls. But it is in accordance with all our experience, to anticipate that such an organization will be higher, richer, more powerful than this; and such is what we mean by a spiritual body.

“Then, the end!” After all are judged, after Christ has come to every soul, after every human heart has submitted itself to the divine truth and love, in this world or in some other world, “then, the end!”—the end of the Christian dispensation, when Christ gives up the kingdom to God the Father; when we all come to our Father, live with our Father; and Christ, our brother and our friend, is by our side, one with us, and we one with him.

That Christ shall “reign till he hath subdued all things under him,” was the firm belief of the Apostle. That “every knee should bow, and every tongue confess Christ to be Lord, to the glory of God the Father,”—this was his plain declaration.

That all evil should be ultimately swallowed up in good, was the distinctly proclaimed optimism of this great Apostle, who had seen more and suffered more of the misery and wretchedness of the world than most men ever dreamed.

All the suffering, all the sin, all the misery of time and eternity never made him doubt for a moment the ultimate and entire triumph of truth and love. Persecuted on every side, he was never forsaken by this hope; cast down, this faith always sustained him.

Oh, divine vision of a perfect time! Oh, heavenly glory of an hour when all sin and shame shall cease, all tears be wiped away, all wrongs redressed, and the myriads of human souls, redeemed, purified, elevated, shall be like the multitudinous stars of heaven; one star differing from another star in glory, but each star raying out its own light, pure white, rich golden, deep blue, or burning crimson, each star moving on its God-given way, without haste or rest. With such a hope in his heart, the great Apostle could bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, endure all things.

In his far-reaching vision he saw a time when "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth;" when "in the dispensation of the fulness of time, God should gather together in one all things in Christ;" when all who died with Adam in sin and misery, should be made alive in Christ,

in peace and love. Nothing less than this could satisfy the desire of that large heart. There was no place in his imagination for an eternal hell, existing forever as a foul blot in the universe of God ; no place in his reason for a world forever falling into relapses of evil and woe ; no place in his faith for two thrones, one in Heaven where God should reign over a part of the universe, the other in Hell, where Satan should rule, a perpetual rival power. No, sooner or later, in some far-off era perhaps, but still sure, the time of a universal salvation would come.

The church has not reached this faith ; it still believes in the future of a universe eternally divided between sin and goodness, between misery and joy. It still disbelieves that God can be all in all, that good will ever overcome evil, or that Christ's redeeming power will be ever sufficient to save all God's children. Hence the weakness of the church ; hence the attacks of unbelief. It has lost the great hope of the Apostle. When that hope is born again into the church, it will renew its youth ; it will see a new heaven and a new earth, and begin once more the course of a united and blessed body having one heart and one soul.

Paul believes fully, and with his whole soul, in human progress, — personal progress for the individual, and the development of a happy and pure society. Mr. Emerson once spoke of himself as “a

perpetual seeker, with no past behind him." He was only repeating what Paul said of himself, "Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect. . . . I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of God's great invitation in Jesus Christ" (Phil. iv. 13).

The wisest thinker of modern times declared it to be the great object of life, and the chief duty of man, "to grow." Paul had long before urged his disciples to constant growth. "Be not like children," said he, — vacillating from one belief to another, carried about like a weathercock with every wind of doctrine, — "but grow up in all things into him who is the head, even Christ" (Eph. iv. 14). And by this he does not mean individual growth alone, but social progress — growth of the whole community. He compares the whole society of Christian believers to the human body, which grows by the interaction of every part, — nerves, heart, lungs, and all other organs doing their work; "by the effectual working of every part, making increase of the body" (Eph. iv. 16). So the Christian body is built up of a like mutual help and common sympathy. In the Christian community every man was to do his part; to one was given the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, to another faith, to another a gift of healing. Each was to use his gift for the good



of the whole, and what one had, he had for the use of all.

Every man was to build — so he taught in another place, changing the figure (1 Cor. iii. 12) — on the one foundation, which was Jesus Christ. On that foundation let each one build. But let him be careful as to what material he uses. If he build with gold, or silver, or precious stones, his work will last. If he build with wood, hay or stubble, his work will be destroyed. But every one ought to build.

Thus Paul had an idea of the steady outward progress of the whole Christian community. All rested on one deep principle, — faith in Jesus as the Christ. It would not come — this growth — from science or philosophy, from conscience or reason, from circumstances or environment; it would only come from faith in this divine ideal, — Christ, the fulness of the manifestation of God.

It was by faith in this ideal Jesus that Paul lived and worked. All his hope for human progress flowed from this faith. “Speaking the truth in love,” said he, “let us grow up in all things into him who is our head, even Jesus Christ.” “Till we all come, in the oneness of faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, into the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Eph. iv. 13. 15).

It was not any abstract philosophic truth which Paul trusted in as the source of human progress, but truth made real in the life of Jesus; truth become a



part of human experience ; truth shown to be possible by one great example. This is the difference between speculative truth, which only moves the reason, and living truth, which awakens the whole soul.

Such a difference appears in this very striking and important fact. The noblest and purest philosophies never aim at reaching the mass of men ; they only hope to convince the select souls, the serious thinkers, the conscientious, devoted scholars. But Paul had a hope to raise, purify and bring to perfection all mankind. He made no distinction. He had faith that this divine spark of Christian faith could kindle a flame in the most ignorant and debased souls. We do not enough consider, in reading his glowing appeals to the Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, in which he urges them all to aim at being perfect in Christ Jesus, that these were not Senecas, rich in knowledge ; not Catos of stern integrity ; but the humble converts, taken out of the common people ; those that had before practised no self-discipline ; those who had no culture ; those to whom he was obliged to say, "You must not steal any more, now you are Christ's ; you must not lie any more ; you must not get drunk any more" (Eph. iv. 25, 27). It was such as these that he expected to climb the heights of every virtue ; to put on the whole panoply of God ; to become perfect men and women in Christ Jesus ; to think of whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely ; to think of these things, and aim

at them. It was such as these that he exhorted to "walk in the Spirit," to be "led by the Spirit," and to "bring forth the fruits of the Spirit,—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

He is our best friend in this world who shows us that he believes in us; that he has confidence in our capacity to become something noble and good; who has faith in us that we are capable of heavenly aspiration, and devoting ourselves to all things true and right. Such a noble friend was Paul to his disciples; the lowly, unknown, half-developed men and women of Colossæ and Ephesus. He exhorted them to a virtue nobler than that which the wisest sage had ever dreamed of. He invited them to go up with him to a height of purity of which no Stoic or Platonist had ever had a conception. "The perfect man in Christ Jesus,"—this was the heavenly vision which moved before him always. By means of this great hope he roused and lifted the world.

Such was his hope for individuals. What were his expectations for the race? The great problem in regard to social progress has been how to combine freedom with union, individual progress with organic life. The Roman Catholic church has obtained union by the sacrifice of freedom; the Protestant churches have saved freedom, but have lost the power which comes from a compact and well disciplined organization.

The Protestant churches become disintegrated, divided; they run into sects and parties; they ever tend toward a helpless individualism. The Catholic church has its own perils; it has unity, but loses variety; it clings to a dead past; it loses its hold on the advancing age; it is at war with the spirit of progress and the soul of the future. This is its peril.

But observe how entirely Paul avoids these two extremes, — how he joins freedom and union, individual development and social action. In the Epistle to the Romans he urges those who are ascetic in their temperament not to judge their liberal brethren, and tells the liberals not to despise the stricter party. He demands freedom of conscience for all. He claims that no one shall be judged for his conformity or nonconformity in the matter of meats and Sabbaths, holy times and sacred customs. “Who art thou that judgeth another man’s servant; to his own master he standeth or falleth.” These broad declarations ought to have prevented the persecution and intolerance of the Christian church in all ages.

What a noble view he had of the Christian church! It was the body of Christ, — his visible, outward means of acting on the world. It was his hands, by which to touch and heal every wounded spirit; his mouth, by which he should teach divine truths to all minds; his eyes, by which he could look tenderly into every soul; his feet, by which he could go about doing good. Every man in the church

could do something for this heavenly master. Having gifts, differing according to the grace given to us, as teachers let us teach a well-balanced doctrine; let us exhort, advise, comfort, warn, cure, according to each man's ability (Rom. xii. 4-8). "Many members, but one body," — this was his idea of the church.

But above all, his faith was in the ever-present Spirit of God, ready to strengthen, teach, pardon, and comfort all souls. The hour had come when God's spirit should be shed abroad on all flesh, and not given only to a few prophets and seers; when all might know God, from the least to the greatest; when the law should be written in every heart; when by one spirit all should be baptized into one body, whether Greek or Jew, man or woman; when God should put his spirit into every soul, teaching it to say "Abba, Father!"

Can the church do better now than to return to this idea of Paul? Amid the conflict of creeds and sects, amid the struggle with hard bigotry on the one side and hopeless materialism on the other, is there any better cure for the evils of the time than a revival of the church of the apostle Paul, in which shall be combined individual freedom and spiritual union?—that kingdom of God which is not meat nor drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

In an age full of tendencies to materialism, and yet full of the spirit of enterprise and progress, what

is needed but a new influx of faith in a Divine Spirit, — not miraculous and arbitrary, but like an ocean of love, in which all are borne along, and which will flow into every heart and mind which opens to receive it? In a day which is full of intellectual activity, what better than to add the joy of faith and hope, the sight of a divine future? In an age of humanity and philanthropy, what is needed but a heavenly love to be joined with earthly sympathy, a divine impulse to bear us on toward human charity? In an age when this life is growing happier, when the old wrongs and abuses are disappearing, what is more needed than the sight of immortality, of the world to come, a continuation of all that is best in this, a place of reunion of loving hearts, of greater peace and joy, where there shall be higher tastes, more generous love, keener insight, and where we shall see and know more of the great Master, the dear Friend, Jesus Christ? Such are the ideas of Paul. Can we find any better than these?





## APPENDIX.

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### NOTE A.

#### THE TENDENCY-THEORY OF BAUR AND ITS MODIFICATION BY HIS SUCCESSORS.

THE peculiarity of the critical movement initiated by Baur is this, that it has substituted for the mythical theory (which had been pushed to its extreme by Strauss) that of "tendency." This means that the writers of the New Testament wrote with a tendency in their mind toward certain beliefs; which tendency acted like a purpose, leading them to modify facts to suit their aim. The purpose may have been a good one, and may have sometimes swayed them unconsciously. Oftener, however, it led them to work in the fashion of those who thought it no harm to invent the numerous false gospels and epistles of the second century. Origen says: "Not only four gospels, but many more have been written, from which those which we have were selected, and have been handed down to the churches. The Church has four gospels, the heretics many, of which one is called the Gospel according to the Egyptians, another the Gospel of the twelve Apostles. Basilides dared to write a gospel, and

give it his own name. I know one called *The Gospel according to Thomas*; another, *The Gospel according to Matthias*; and we read of many others.”<sup>1</sup> So also testify Irenæus, Jerome and Ambrose.<sup>2</sup>

Two principal events, it is said, gave rise at first to this tendency to create sacred scriptures. The first was the controversy between Pauline and Judaic Christianity, the second that between the Catholic Church and Gnosticism. All the historic books of the New Testament are supposed by Baur to show the influence of the first of these controversies; and to be, so far, not historic works, but theological. Thus, Mackay summarizes the Baur hypothesis by telling us that it makes the fourth Gospel purely ideal; and he says of the others that each has “a specific tendency, a more or less determinate purpose, a disposition to neutralize existing varieties of opinion, and to pave the way for Catholic establishment. In every case the writer’s theory, or policy, exercises of course a modifying influence upon his narrative. Matthew is supposed to represent especially the Judaical tradition, but with intermingling Catholic concession; Luke is a conciliatory aggregate of Judaical notions and narratives, superadded to a Pauline basis, which, next to the genuine Pauline epistles, may be considered as the purest and most important document of Paulinism.”<sup>3</sup>

This “tendency-theory” reaches its full development in its treatment of the Book of Acts. Of this Zeller says, “The view that the Acts has a purely historical aim, that

<sup>1</sup> Origen, first sermon on Luke, — quoted by De Wette.

<sup>2</sup> See Baring-Gould, “Lost and Hostile Gospels.”

<sup>3</sup> “The Tübingen School and its Antecedents.” By R. W. Mackay. 1863.

is, that it narrates the facts it contains for their own sake, must be described as now discarded.”<sup>1</sup>

Those who deny the authenticity of the Book of Acts, base their objections on these grounds: First, the improbability of the facts recorded,—such as the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira, the phenomena of the day of Pentecost, and the profuse miracles ascribed to Peter and Paul. Next, the divergence of the account given in Acts of the relation of Paul to Peter, from that contained in the Epistle to the Galatians. “The Paul of Acts,” says Baur,<sup>2</sup> “is manifestly quite a different person from the Paul of the Epistles.” Third, the different account of the council at Jerusalem in Acts and Galatians. According to Overbeck,<sup>3</sup> the book has insoluble difficulties of “exaggeration,” “incorrectness,” “ambiguity,” “insufficiency,” “ignorance.” Zeller<sup>4</sup> considers it quite impossible that Luke or any companion of Paul should have written in good faith the account of the miracles (Acts xvi. 26 *et seq.*; xxviii. 7–10), or described Paul as doing what he could not possibly have done (Acts xxi. 20; xxiii. 6). But Pfeiderer, who also makes the Book of Acts a tendency-writing, does not see the force of some of these objections.<sup>5</sup> According to Baur, Swegler, and Zeller, Paul in the Book of Acts becomes a Judaizing Christian, while Peter and James are converted into Pauline Christians; and the Acts is regarded as a work written with the express purpose of

<sup>1</sup> Zeller, “Contents and Origin of the Acts,” etc. By Dr. Edward Zeller. Translated by Joseph Dare. 1875. But since Zeller said this, there has been a reaction in favor of Acts.

<sup>2</sup> Baur, “Paulus,” Introduction.

<sup>3</sup> Introduction to Zeller on Acts.

<sup>4</sup> *Ut supra*, ii. 264 (English translation).

<sup>5</sup> Pfeiderer, “Paulinism,” ii. 242 (English translation).

reconciling the two parties, by making mutual concessions.<sup>1</sup> In it Paul is Petrefied and Peter is Paulified.<sup>2</sup> It is considered by Baur a systematic attempt to gloss over the differences between the Pauline and Judaizing Christians, judiciously blending fact and fiction, so as to cool the heated memory of former strife.<sup>3</sup> Zeller calls the Book of Acts "the draft of a proposal for peace, presented to the Judaists by the Pauline party."<sup>4</sup>

We may admit that there is a certain grain of truth in these views. We must not undervalue the great service done to the church by the labors of Baur and his successors. They have called attention to many points hitherto unnoticed. They have roused a remarkable ardor of inquiry into the condition of the early church. They have caused every part of the New Testament to be examined and discussed as never before. It is curious that critics, who regard most of the books of the New Testament as unhistoric, and as coming from unknown writers, should be the authors of a vast series of monographs on single books and single passages of these writings, seeking to find the exact truth concerning them. This, of itself shows that their work is not mainly destructive. The work of destruction soon wearies. Such writers as Strauss and Froude tire of it, and turning to some other field of

<sup>1</sup> Meyer, "Commentary on Acts," i. 11 (English translation).

<sup>2</sup> Sorley, "Jewish Christians and Judaism. A Study in the History of the First Two Centuries." By W. R. Sorley, Cambridge, 1881.

<sup>3</sup> Sorley (*ut supra*).

<sup>4</sup> Quoted by Overbeck. Int. to Acts, i. 18. (English translation of Zeller). The school of Baur derives from Hegel a deep interest in the study of History, considered as showing the development of ideas. It is not a body of individual critics, but a critical-historic school, which is itself in a state of development.

literature, become historians, dramatists or novelists. But the vast productivity of the Tübingen school shows that it is not seeking to destroy but to create and discover. It has pointed out the fact that the bitter opposition to Paul by the Judaizing Christians was only an extreme tendency of the Jewish-Christian party at Jerusalem. There is no evidence that the Jewish apostles opposed Paul; but the course of Peter at Antioch, rebuked by Paul, makes it probable that when the Jewish Christians were together, they felt little interest in Paul's universalism. Since Peter withdrew from the Gentiles at Antioch, as soon as the Jewish Christians came from James at Jerusalem, it is plain that the church at Jerusalem considered Gentile Christians as their inferiors. Just as the whites in this country have recognized the rights of the colored people in theory, but practically have often regarded them as a lower race, so the Jewish Christians felt toward the Gentiles. But the critics are mistaken who see anything essentially unhistoric in the account of Peter's course toward Cornelius (Acts x.), or his speech at the council, (Acts xv.). For this is singularly in harmony with his character as given in the gospels; which is that of a man very liable to be influenced by his surroundings. Phrenologically speaking, Peter had a large organ of the love of admiration, large sympathy, and little caution. He acted on the impulse of the moment. He could not bear the ridicule of the maid servant and the soldiers, and so denied his master, whom he had just before been ready to defend at the risk of his life. First of all the disciples, he could see the Christ, the mighty king and deliverer, in his Galilean master. First of them all, he saw that in every nation those who feared God and did right might become followers of the Christ. In both cases he could see the



principle ; in both cases he found it hard to practise it. The very rebuke addressed to him by Paul (Galatians ii. 14) assumes that Peter accepted in principle the same universalism as Paul himself. Paul charges Peter with inconsistency, dissimulation, and with not acting up to his principles, — thus taking it for granted, as well known, that Peter agreed with himself that it was right to treat the Gentiles as fellow-Christians. Therefore this passage in Galatians is in full agreement with Acts xi. 17, 18, and Acts xv. 7–11.

Nor is there any inconsistency between Paul's course (Acts xvi. 3 ; Acts xxi. 26) and his declarations (Galatians ii. 3 ; v. 2). Even Pfeiderer points out this (ii. 234), — showing that the cases of Timothy and Titus were wholly different, one being a half Jew by birth, the other wholly a Gentile. Paul willingly admitted that it was right for Jews to keep their law ; but he denied that any such demand should be made on the Gentiles. A Congregational minister might be perfectly willing to immerse a man brought up as a Baptist, to whom this seemed the true form of baptism ; while he would utterly deny the claim that *only* those thus baptized were members of the Christian church. So Paul admitted that Jewish rites were good and useful for the Jews, but denied that they were necessary for salvation to any Gentile who believed in Christ. If Gentiles who already believed in Christ were led to think it necessary for their salvation to be circumcised, they were then denying that they could be saved by faith in Christ alone, and were thus virtually made to deny his redeeming power. Paul's principle was that "neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation of faith and love." (Gal. vi. 15).



That the Book of Acts was written after the bitterness of the conflict was over, "as a draft of a proposition of peace presented to the Judaizers by the Pauline party," is one of the strangest of all suggestions. Let us try to imagine such a transaction. The Pauline party is supposed to say to the other: "We will agree to falsify history and to represent the hostile apostles as in full agreement. *We* know, and the churches know, that Peter and James refused to acknowledge uncircumcised Gentiles as Christians. But we will invent a story about Peter's having had a vision, and in consequence of this, of his baptizing a Roman centurion and his family. We will also imagine a council at Jerusalem which shall be assumed to decide that the Gentiles need not be circumcised. Allow this, and we will in turn concede to you as history the statement that Paul conformed to Jewish customs, and deferred to the opinions of the Jewish apostles. We will then both agree to accept this compromise as the history of the early church, and wholly to ignore henceforth the true story." So said, so done. Not a whisper transpired of this ingenious transaction. Every church, from Egypt to Gaul, accepted this invention as the true historic account. The great scholars in the church at the end of the second century, Irenæus, Origen, Tertullian, never suspected the fabrication; and it was reserved for the ingenuity of German scholars in the nineteenth century, to discover the real history of this astonishing compromise.

Such a theory as this could only have occurred to men who have been so devoted to the critical study of theology as to have lost the historic imagination which puts itself into the spirit of a period. Still, there is a basis of truth in all this. We can easily see a difference between the historic value of the first and last part of the Book of Acts.

Critics of all schools agree that the author of the third Gospel and that of the Book of Acts is the same person. The most ancient tradition in the church ascribes both works to Luke, and the recent objections to this tradition are not of much weight. If the object of the Book of Acts had been to modify the belief of the church, it would not have been ascribed to such an obscure author, but to Silas, Timothy, Titus, or to Paul himself. If the "we" passages (those in which the writer associates himself with Paul) were not written by an actual companion, and were contrived by a falsifying and later author to give a contemporaneous aspect to the narrative, why was not the name of the travelling companion inserted? If it was a subsequent forgery of Pauline Christianity in the second century, intended to reconcile itself with the Jewish Christians, why did it not insert an account of a meeting of Peter and Paul in Rome, and of their common martyrdom there? Why did it leave off so abruptly, and in an unfinished state? And why close this effort to reconcile the Jews to Paul with an account of his denouncing the Jews as incorrigible?

All such difficulties which beset the tendency-hypothesis are removed, if we suppose antiquity right in attributing the Acts to Luke, referred to as "the beloved physician" (Col. iv. 14.) He was probably a Greek, and as his language shows, not well acquainted with Jewish customs. He was a follower and friend of Paul (Philémon 24; 2 Timothy iv. 11), probably of Asia Minor, and crossing with Paul from Troas to Europe. For the "we" begins at this point, — and continues, with interruptions, to the end. It shows the writer to have been Paul's companion in Greece, Asia Minor, at Jerusalem, and on his voyage to Rome.

This view accounts for the more unhistorical character of the first part of the book, which refers to that period of the church of which Luke could have had no personal knowledge. He probably found his material for this, as well as for the incidents of the life of Jesus, during his long residence at Jerusalem and in the vicinity, in the two years and more of the Apostle's imprisonment at Cæsarea. For the "we" pronoun ceases on the arrival of Paul and his companions at Jerusalem (Acts xxi. 18), and begins again (Acts xxvii. 1) when they set sail for Italy. The phrase used in the last passage seems to show that the writer was one of the party of Paul, and under restraint with him. At all events, he had the opportunity, during these two years, of obtaining material for the first part of the work. It gives such details in regard to Paul's speeches as show that he was probably present as a spectator and hearer, as he would naturally have wished to be. (See Acts xxi. 26, 27, 30, 33, 34, 40; xxii. 22, 23; xxiii. 1; xxiv. 1, 2, &c.) Some of Paul's speeches he may have learned from himself, during the voyage. The abrupt conclusion of the work is best explained by the probable intention of the writer to make a continuation, which he was prevented from doing, possibly by his own sudden death. The book is so far written with a tendency, that it shows the natural feeling of partiality for Paul which must have been felt by a friend and companion. It is so far a book to conciliate the Jews as it comes from an educated man, with the historic *animus* of impartiality. From such a writer you would hardly look for a polemic against the Judaizers, like that of Galatians; since no such polemic appears in Paul's other writings, not even in Romans or Corinthians. But if the book was written in the second century with the purpose of inventing a history

about Paul and his opponents, it is incredible that the adroit writer should have made no use of Paul's epistles, in order to give local color to his story. I see unanswerable objections, then, to the theory that the Book of Acts is "a quasi-historical romance," or "a well-meant effort of a later period to heal party differences by exhibiting the two great party-leaders in friendly co-operation." To make out such a theory, Baur and his successors have been obliged to force their assumptions upon their facts. When the documents describe Peter and Paul as agreeing with each other, then the accounts are called forgeries written for that purpose; when they bring out any instance of disagreement, then they are not considered to be forgeries but accepted as reliable statements. When either of the documents omits a fact mentioned by the other, it is supposed to prove the writer to have been ignorant of what he ought to have known; but when *both* mention it, it becomes plain that one must have copied from the other. By such a process anything can be proved, and anything disproved. This may be criticism, but it is not impartial inquiry:

Zeller, to show that the Book of Acts is a tendency-work, tells us that there is a remarkable harmony between the first part, which is devoted to Peter and the older apostles, and the last part, which gives the career of Paul. Both apostles perform similar miracles, endure like sufferings, and are compensated by similar triumphs. As Cornelius worships Peter, the people of Lystra worship Paul. As Peter punishes Ananias and Sapphira, so the demoniac (Acts xix. 16) punishes the false exorcists. Zeller, however, meets with this difficulty: Why does the book suspend its narrative before telling of the martyrdom of Paul, — when the elder apostles James and Stephen

attained this high glory? And why does it omit the trials and sufferings which Paul himself relates (2 Cor. xi. 23, &c.)? Because, says Zeller, this would cause the merits of Paul to outweigh too greatly those of Peter and his companions, and the writer's purpose was to keep them exactly even. This sort of criticism is evidently too ingenious. When there is a parallel between the labors and sufferings of the leaders of the two great parties, it is supposed to show a purpose of keeping up the equilibrium. But when the martyrdom on the one side is told, and that on the other studiously suppressed, (for Zeller is certain that the writer of Acts knew of the death of Paul<sup>1</sup>) then this indicates the same purpose of keeping up an equilibrium. But how impossible to believe the writer of such an artless story to be ingeniously balancing in his own mind the amount of fictitious merits which he shall invent for each of the two parties. Imagine him saying, "I will conceal the martyrdom of Paul, for that would tend to eclipse the glory of Peter!" A critic who can push his theory so far, in order to prove a book to be "a tendency-writing," shows that his own work, at least, must be regarded as written with a tendency.

According to the hypothesis of Baur and his followers, most of the books of the New Testament, with the exception of Paul's four chief epistles, belong to the class of "tendency-writings." They therefore were written in a period far later than the time of the apostles, — a period when wholesale falsification seemed natural and proper. There may not have been any deliberate intention to deceive; these pseudonymous writings were possibly innocent fictions, produced for purposes of edification. An immense amount of ingenious study has been expended

<sup>1</sup> He concludes this from Acts xx. 24, 25.



on this hypothesis ; and by such labor and learning it has been made plausible, at least to those who already accept the theory. So that, at last, some writers (like the Dutch authors of "The Bible for Learners") assume that the proposition is proved, and teach it dogmatically, as a universally admitted fact.

But before any such critical assumption can be regarded as established, we must look not only at the arguments in its favor, but also at the objections to it. We may sum up the doctrine of Baur and his followers thus: The books of the New Testament, with the exception of the four chief Pauline epistles and the Apocalypse, are fictitious productions belonging to some period in the second century, having for their object to reconcile the Petrine and Pauline Christians. They were written, not by the authors whose names they bear, but by some other, unknown persons. The facts which they narrate and to which they refer are not historic, though they may rest on some historic foundation. What this foundation is, we can never ascertain with certainty. All the miraculous part must, of course, be set aside as pure invention. The resurrection of Jesus was based on mere imagination, and the belief in it came from the depressed and nervous condition of the disciples after the crucifixion of their master. The wish was father to the thought ; the thought grew into a belief ; the belief became a certainty ; and this was the rock on which the church was built.

The difficulties to be encountered by those who maintain this view, are such as these :—

The whole Christian church at the end of the second century had accepted the books now contained in our canon, as coming from the authors whose names they bear. This happened by the law of selection, and



the survival of the fittest. The New Testament was not put together by the authority of any church synod, but by the conviction of the whole church that these books were authentic and genuine. Nor did this take place because of the absence of a critical sense, or from unreasoning acquiescence. The books of the New Testament remained in the belief of Christians as authentic, out of a great mass of apocryphal gospels and epistles, many of which are still extant. They were divided into two classes, those generally accepted by the church, and those doubtful; while the books not in our canon were reckoned, says Eusebius, as spurious.

There were great critics and scholars in the second and third centuries, perfectly able to examine and test the quality of an alleged sacred writing, who yet accepted our present Scriptures.

Again, the questions which intensely interested all Christians at the end of the second century, such as Christ's Mission to the underworld, and the sharp conflicts of Christianity with Gnosticism, scarcely come to light in the books of the New Testament.<sup>1</sup>

The numerous coincidences, which were evidently undesigned, because unapparent, and the contradictions which are apparent, and on the surface, both show that the writers were not framing fictitious gospels and epistles. If artless, how could they so skilfully interweave hundreds of historic facts and illusions; and if artful, why did they leave so many discrepancies and contradictions?

O. B. Frothingham<sup>2</sup> tells us that it is "as plain as any

<sup>1</sup> See two important monographs on this subject by Prof. F. Huidekoper, of Meadville, Penn. "Works of Frederic Huidekoper." David G. Francis. New York, 1883.

<sup>2</sup> Cradle of Christ, p. 96.

point of literary criticism can be that the Acts of the Apostles is not to be relied on for information concerning the life and opinions of Paul." "This must henceforth be regarded as one of the points established." "The unknown author romances." Mr. Frothingham follows Baur and Zeller in saying that the book is intended to mediate between the Pauline and Petrine view.

But the more recent criticism, as represented in the learned theological reviews of Germany, has essentially modified the conclusions of Baur, and by no means agrees with those of Mr. Frothingham, nor with "The Bible for Learners"<sup>1</sup> in depreciating the historic value of the Book of Acts. Thus Pfeiderer<sup>2</sup> who is classed by Holtzmann<sup>3</sup> as one who has followed in the direction of the Tübingen school, but with alterations and improvements, speaks thus—after describing the view which makes the Book of Acts a deliberate attempt at modifying history for the sake of conciliation:—

"There are considerations of the greatest importance adverse to this view. In the first place, a stand-point of this kind is wholly without example in the history of Paulinism." After showing this, Pfeiderer says, "It is much more probable that the author, possessed with the consciousness of his own time, . . . understood and honestly made use of his sources of information concerning it." Pfeiderer then adds that the author of Luke's Gos-

<sup>1</sup> "We clearly perceive that this book (Acts) contains an incorrect account, and that this inaccuracy is not the result of accident or ignorance, but is a deliberate design. . . . to hide in some degree the actual course of events." "Bible for Learners," iii. 25. Roberts. Boston.

<sup>2</sup> Paulinism, ii. 229.

<sup>3</sup> Article in Hilgenfeld's "Zeitschrift für wissenschaftlichen Theologie." 1882.

pel, and of the Book of Acts, laid down a critical and historic method for his gospel and "undeniably carried it out." He made use of "all the sources of information accessible to him, whether written or traditional," with "careful comparison, testing, and conscientious use of them, for the purpose of accurately ascertaining and setting forth the actual facts that occurred." Pfeiderer believes the author of Luke's Gospel to have occupied a Pauline standpoint, but says that this "indicates the more forcibly the honest endeavor of the historian to give an impartial consideration to his various sources of information; so that he has not hesitated to admit passages of the most decided Ebionitish character, . . . which his conscience did not allow him, as a historian, to leave out." This being his course in the Gospel, it is in the last degree improbable that he took an exactly opposite course in the Book of Acts. As to the Apostolic Council, in regard to which the school of Baur considers the Acts in direct opposition to Galatians, Pfeiderer says that the difference is of such a kind as not to justify the assumption of intentional misrepresentation. He considers that the essential facts are correctly stated in the Book of Acts.

Nor does he see any reason to believe that the account of the course of Paul in regard to the circumcision of Timothy (Acts xxvi. 3) is unhistorical; since his case differed essentially from that of Titus (Gal. ii. 3), — Timothy being half a Jew, and Titus a Gentile; and the ceremony in Paul's mind being a matter of indifference, and innocent, unless when insisted on as a duty for Gentile Christians.

Holsten is another follower of Baur. But in a recent work<sup>1</sup> he takes the ground that anything unhistoric in the

<sup>1</sup> Das Evangelium des Paulus. 1880.

Book of Acts has crept in unconsciously. And, though a disciple of the strictest sect of the Tübingen school, he considers the Book of Acts as an important historic source, being next in value to the four great Pauline Epistles.

William Grimm is another eminent theologian of the scientific school, who tells us that <sup>1</sup> "thoughtful criticism will show that much is genuine and authentic which the school of Baur has hastily rejected."

A striking article by Holtzmann <sup>2</sup> gives a careful survey of the present state of opinion in the great critical schools of Germany in regard to the historic value of the Book of Acts. He puts the theologians into three classes: first, those who take the view of Baur; then, those who have largely modified it; and lastly, those who fully defend the historic character of the Book of Acts. In the second class, he places Reuss, Oster, Sabatier, Renan, Aubé, Keim, W. Grimm, Lekebusch and Oertel. In the third class are Neander, Olshausen, Ebrard, Ewald, Ritschl, Lechler, Bleek, Mangold, Trip, Baumgarten, Hofmann, Meyer, Wendt, Sieffert, Thiersch, Pressensé, Wetzel, Friedrich, Weiss, Schenkel, K. Schmidt, and F. Zimmer. So far, therefore, from the unhistoric character of the Book of Acts being a finally settled point of the results of criticism, it is plain that the latest, freest, and most exact criticism tends strongly to a belief in the value of the Book of Acts, as a reliable source of knowledge in regard to the history of the apostle Paul.

In the present work I have so regarded it, though holding it secondary to the Pauline writings. After a full and careful examination of the objections urged against the authenticity of Ephesians, Colossians and 2nd Thessalonians, I can see no adequate grounds for supposing

<sup>1</sup> Hilgenfeld, "Zeitschrift." 1882.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

them to be fabrications of a later author. The Pastoral Epistles are more doubtful; but this is less important for our purpose, as they contain little to modify our knowledge of the Apostle drawn from the other sources.

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## NOTE B.

### AUTHORSHIP OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

WE will here consider the objections to the Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Ephesians; first suggested by Schleiermacher and Usteri, afterwards emphasized by De Wette, and finally treated as conclusively proved by the school of Baur. That this letter could not have been sent to Ephesus is argued from the fact that some of the older manuscripts omit that address (so Marcion, Tertullian, and the old manuscripts in Basil), but chiefly because it seems written to those who were personally unknown to Paul (i. 15; iii. 1-4; iv. 21), and contains no friendly salutations, though Paul was in Ephesus more than three years (Acts xx. 31). Whatever may be the explanation of this omission, it is not so much an objection to the authorship of Paul, as to the opposite hypothesis, that the epistle was composed at a later period by one falsely assuming the name of the Apostle. Any one able to imitate the style and spirit of Paul as well as is done in this epistle,<sup>1</sup> would

<sup>1</sup> Erasmus says of it, "*Idem in hac epistolâ Pauli fervor, eadem profunditas, idem omnino spiritus et pectus.*"



certainly have been able to add the local color and details which are here wanting. An impostor in the second century, trying to imitate a letter of Paul to Ephesus, would have filled it with personal allusions, recollections, and salutations.

A second reason assigned for supposing it a later fabrication is that it has many expressions and thoughts like those in the Epistle to the Colossians. These are collected by De Wette.<sup>1</sup> It is asked whether a man of so much fertility of thought and richness of expression would have condescended to copy himself. Certainly not, supposing Paul's purpose in writing had been to acquire a literary reputation. But this was the last thing in his mind. His letters were written for immediate practical objects; and if the same truths were needed by two neighboring churches, and would do them good, he would not hesitate to repeat to the second what he had just said to the other. His mind was full of strong emotions and convictions, and they flowed forth in similar forms of utterance. To object to this is the very pedantry of criticism.<sup>2</sup> Paul himself says, "To write the same thing again does me no harm, and is safer for you" (Phil. iii. 1).

Another reason, of more weight, for doubting the authenticity of this letter to the Ephesians is derived from its contents; which are said not to be Pauline. Baur describes them as referring to "the transcendental regions of the world of spirits," and as considering

<sup>1</sup> "De Wette's Introduction to the New Testament. Translated from the fifth, improved and enlarged edition. By Frederick Frothingham. Boston. 1858."

<sup>2</sup> Pfeiderer says that the Epistle to the Ephesians is "the most developed form of Paulinism, and the richest in dogma."



Christ as the absolute principle of being, and the centre of the spirit-realm. "We thus find ourselves," says this critic, "in a circle of ideas belonging to a much later period than that of Paul, namely, that of the Gnostics. The work of Christ is to restore the unity of the worlds. We find here the Gnostic idea of *πλήρωμα*, or fulness; of *γνώσις*, or knowledge; of a *μυστήριον*, etc." These allusions to Gnosticism are certainly very slight, if they exist at all. And though the Gnostic ideas were not developed systems in the time of Paul, they surely were there as tendencies of thought. It is natural that he should refer to what was in the air, though it had not yet taken any distinct form. The true explanation of the difference between the thoughts in Paul's earlier writings and those contained in the Epistles of the Captivity (Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians and Philemon), is to be found in the progress and unfolding of his own ideas. This is fully shown by Sabatier, in the excellent work already referred to, in which he describes the development of the mind of Paul. Beginning with the earliest letters—those to the Thessalonians—he finds in them the spirit and thoughts of a missionary. They take their place very naturally in the account in the Book of Acts of the second missionary journey. The references to what occurred at Philippi and Thessalonica coincide with those in Acts. Full of life and energy, full of touching affection for the first Gentile believers, there is little of doctrine in these early letters. Much emphasis is laid on the coming of Christ, which in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians is believed to be near. But in the Second Epistle Paul corrects the impression he may have given, of a very speedy manifestation of the Master. Before that coming, he

says, some evil principle in the church or the world, which was then restrained, must be revealed in order to be destroyed. Things must grow worse before they can grow better. In this period of his life the question of Law and Gospel, Faith and Works, had not taken possession of the Apostle's mind. His main thought was of his "Gospel,"—the good news of spiritual salvation through Christ, which he preached to Jew and Gentile, and which he saw producing such happy results.

Then came the struggle with the Judaizing Christians. The heat of this battle appears in the Epistle to the Galatians; but the profound ideas which it developed in the mind of Paul are more fully unfolded in the Epistle to the Romans. In this treatise are brought into clear light the truths which transformed Christianity from a Jewish sect into a religion for mankind.

In the Epistles to the Corinthians we find a further development of thought. The churches which have been founded are now to be organized. These letters contain the methods and principle of church organization. Existing difficulties are wisely and kindly removed; exciting questions are treated with a strong yet tender hand. Rebuke and warning are combined with consolation and hope. If in the Epistles to the Thessalonians Paul appears as a missionary and preacher; if, in the Epistle to the Galatians he is a powerful opposer of error; if, in the Romans he becomes a philosophic teacher of large doctrines; in the letters to the Corinthians, he is the church father, guiding, warning, explaining, comforting, with long-suffering and gentle wisdom. Lastly, there came another stage in the steadily unfolding mind of one who was ever "forgetting the things behind, and reaching forward to those before." In his two years' captivity

at Cæsarea, his thoughts took a higher flight. History, past and to come, unrolled before his eyes. He saw how all things had been working together, in the providence of God, for the coming of Christ; how all things had been made for him; how the gospel of Christ was the fulness of him who fills all in all. In the heavenly world, the world of divine truth and love, Christ sits on the right hand of God; far above all other prophets, teachers, leaders of mankind. They are all dominated by his superior thought, — whether thrones, dominions or powers. The discords of life are to be harmonized in him; the wars of Jew and Gentile opinion, the vast beliefs of Oriental, Egyptian, and Gnostic speculation, will be resolved and attuned to concord by the great Master. Paul has now left behind his crude expectation of an outward coming of Jesus as the King of the world. He sees his reign as a mighty spiritual influence, which shall subject all things to himself.

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## NOTE C.

## PAUL AND SENECA.

A LEGEND existed in the early church concerning a friendly intercourse which was believed to exist between the apostle Paul and Seneca, during the imprisonment of the former in Rome. There is nothing impossible, nor indeed very improbable, in such a relation. They were of about the same age, Seneca having been born

A. D. 3. The brother of Seneca, Gallio, was proconsul of Achaia when Paul was at Corinth, and delivered Paul from the hands of his persecutors, the Jews. As Seneca and his brother were much attached to each other, it is not unlikely that Gallio wrote to Seneca about Paul. A prisoner in Rome, Paul was under the control of Burrhus, prætorian prefect, the intimate friend of Seneca; and this prefect was favorable to Paul, allowing him to occupy a separate dwelling, with a soldier for his guard. Paul mentions it as a favorable opportunity for the spread of the Gospel, that his imprisonment had brought him to the knowledge of many in the prætor's court (Phil. i. 13). Beside this, it would be natural for Seneca, a man of an active and inquiring mind, and interested in monotheism, to find much agreement between Paul's views and his own. Finally, a correspondence exists between Paul and Seneca, consisting of fourteen letters, eight of which are from Seneca to Paul, and six from Paul to Seneca. This correspondence is referred to, without any expressions of doubt as to its authenticity, by Saint Jerome in the fourth century, and probably also by Saint Augustine.

These facts appear to furnish a sufficient historic foundation for the legend; but a more careful investigation diminishes their value.

To begin with the correspondence. We must admit that if these letters were the production of a later period, they were not written with any dogmatic or partisan purpose. On the other hand, they bear no trace of the mind either of Seneca or of Paul. They have not the epigrammatic acuteness of the first, nor the impetuous ardor of the other. They are polite letters, full of mutual compliments, more in the style of Cicero than of Seneca.

Nor do they seem to have been known to the church Fathers, with the exception of the two above referred to. And, at all events, the internal evidence goes far to show that they are not authentic.

That the theology and ethics of Seneca resembled in many respects those of Paul, is undeniable. But this was because Stoicism was largely in sympathy with the best Jewish thought, as Professor Huidekoper has shown.<sup>1</sup> Both believed in one Supreme Being; that the heathen Gods were to perish; that heathen temples were to be avoided; that the Divine nature could not be represented by material images; that there would be a resurrection, and a final conflagration of the world. Jews and Stoics both laid great stress on moral conduct and character. Both taught a *πρόνοια*, or Providence, using the same Greek word to express it. Both laid stress on wisdom, as the basis of character. The Stoics, like the Jews, spoke of the Law.<sup>2</sup> On account of such resemblances as these, and for other reasons, Prof. Huidekoper considers the views of the Stoics to have originated under Jewish influence. At all events, as these resemblances existed before the coming of Christ, the fact that we find like analogies in Seneca is no proof of his having been influenced by the teaching of Paul.

The theologians of the Middle Ages regarded Seneca as a Christian, and placed him in heaven with Trajan, Aristotle, Socrates, Virgil, and Cicero. But these mediæ-

<sup>1</sup> Judaism at Rome, c. iii. §1.

<sup>2</sup> Aubertin (*Sénèque et Saint Paul*) mentions, as the chief resemblance between the Doctrine of the Porch and the Gospel, that they agree in teaching the superiority of the soul to the body, and spirit to matter, in insisting on the renunciation of perishable things, in exercising austere virtues, and loving the things unseen and eternal.



val doctors were merciful and liberal. They felt quite sure that Socrates was a Christian, as indeed Ambrose, Chrysostom and Augustine had declared before them. They could not imagine that Seneca could have been so near to Paul without being converted. And it was an honor to the church to have such a disciple. Seneca was filled with a moral enthusiasm for goodness; and was a scholar who was acquainted with all the knowledge of his time. An orator, philosopher, poet, geographer, historian, naturalist, his intellect excelled in all directions. And many passages in his writings seem to indicate a very lofty religious faith. No doubt, like other Stoics, he was a pantheist in his theology; but his pantheism was consistent with views much like those of monotheism. He distinguishes God from the matter out of which he made the world. "This great Artist," he says, "who is Universal Reason, in forming the world made use of a pre-existent matter. Evil, then, does not come from God, the active cause of all things, but from matter, which is the passive cause."<sup>1</sup> Seneca teaches that all events are unalterably fixed, but takes care to say that God is not subject to fate, but its author. "God submits to destiny, or rather God *is* destiny. The volitions of God are inscrutable laws, which he himself obeys. He commands once, and obeys always. This does not destroy either his liberty or his power, for he only obeys himself."<sup>2</sup>

The point where Seneca comes nearest to the teachings of Paul is in his doctrine of the communion of man with God. "Reason is common to the Gods and to men; in the Gods it is consummate, in man capable of becoming so. Why then should we doubt that there is something

<sup>1</sup> De Providentiâ, v., — quoted by Aubertin.

<sup>2</sup> Aubertin, p. 186.



divine in man? All this world in which we are contained is one and divine; thus we are companions of God and members of him. God is near thee, is with thee, is within thee. Therefore I say that a sacred Spirit sits within us, observing our good and our evil,—our guardian; and as we treat it, so it treats us. Do you wonder that men go to the Gods? God comes to man; yes, what is more, he comes *into* man. There can be no goodness in the human mind apart from God. Divine seeds are scattered in human bodies. If these are rightly cultivated, they grow up to resemble that from which they came; if not, they are like the seeds which fall into a sterile or marshy soil, which destroys them.”<sup>1</sup>

This analogy between Seneca and Paul is, however, more apparent than real. God, with Seneca, is the causal Spirit of the universe, acting by invariable law. This Spirit is necessarily in all things, therefore in man. According as we treat it, it treats us, because it obeys unchanging laws. This, however, is very far from the Holy Spirit of tender love and Fatherly influence in which Paul believed. The doctrines of Seneca and the Stoics were very noble; but they were not those of the Gospel.

<sup>1</sup> Epistolæ, xcii. §§ 25, 28; xli.; lxxiii.

## NOTE D.

## THE "MANY ADVERSARIES" OF PAUL.

A MAN of such decided views as Paul, and of his energetic character, could not fail to have enemies. A great reformer bent on changing the faith and practice of mankind, might expect to encounter the bitter animosity both of Jew and Gentile. The world allows a man to be a saint, provided he is satisfied with saving his own soul, and does not wish to save the souls of others. But all reformers have been hated and persecuted by those whom they desired to reform.

The first opposers of Paul were, as we have seen, the Pharisaic party among the Jews. Though, on one occasion, by an adroit appeal to their prejudices, he induced them to take his side, yet their emissaries opposed him and his work wherever he went. The next opposers of the Apostle were the Judaizing Christians. These were the followers of James and Peter, and the Epistle to the Galatians was directed against their attacks upon him. This controversy we have also considered. Baur and his school have shown how much more serious this opposition to Paul was than had been hitherto believed. Neither Peter, James, nor John attack Paul by name. But there are evident allusions to his teaching, or to that of his followers, in the Epistle of James. In two or three passages there is almost a verbal contradiction between the two apostles. James asks, "Was not our father Abraham jus-

tified by works when he had offered his son Isaac on the altar?" (James ii. 21.) Paul says, "If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not toward God" (Rom. iv. 2). James demands, "What doth it profit that a man say he hath faith, and have not works; can faith save him?" (James ii. 14.) Paul declares, "By grace ye are saved through faith . . . not of works" (Eph. ii. 8). James concludes, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (James ii. 24). Meantime Paul asserts, "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the works of the law" (Rom. iii. 28).

Certainly there is no real contradiction between the "faith" of Paul and the "works" of James. But it is evident that James is opposing some doctrine which he believed to be taught among Christians. And who emphasized faith as against works as much as Paul did? It is therefore highly probable that James here means to confute either Paul's supposed doctrine or some abuse of it.

The Book of "Revelation of Jesus Christ" was written A. D. 68, and meant to encourage Jewish Christians, in the calamities of that dreadful time, with the hope of a speedy coming of Christ, to make Jerusalem a new Jerusalem, the centre of the worship of the world. It predicts the downfall and destruction of Rome, and the end of Judaism. But it is written in the spirit of Jewish Christianity. In the historic introduction, addressed to the Christian churches, where no symbolic veil was needed to hide its meaning from his too powerful enemies, the writer opposes what he evidently regards as Pauline doctrine. Paul is not named indeed, but his teaching or that of his followers is indicated. The writer speaks with

great anger of those who teach that Christians may eat meat offered to idols (Rev. ii. 14, 15, 20). Paul had discussed this question (1 Cor. viii.), and had taken the broad ground that eating meat would not make men worse or better, but on account of weak consciences he advised them to abstain. This would seem very lax doctrine to the Jewish Christians. The writer also speaks of those who call themselves apostles, and are not; and who call themselves Jews, and are not. He praises the Ephesians for having tried those who called themselves apostles, and found them false. The seven churches here praised for having rejected false doctrines are all in the Province of Asia, in Lydia, or close to it, and the writer of 2nd Timothy makes Paul say, "All in Asia are turned away from me." Hence it is probable that the author of the Book of "Revelation" was one of those Jewish Christians who disliked Paul and his doctrine, though it is hardly possible that this book was written by an apostle.

However this may be, there is reason to believe that the opposition to Paul and his doctrine among the Jewish Christians continued a hundred years later, till the middle or latter half of the second century. The Clementine Homilies and Recognitions, supposed to be written between A. D. 150 and A. D. 170,<sup>1</sup> are evidently the work of a Jewish opposer of Paul. In these, Peter and not Paul, is called the apostle to the Gentiles. Peter is called "the first of the apostles," but the apostle James is spoken of as his superior in dignity, and as "the Head of the church," "Chief Bishop," "Bishop of Bishops, ruling all the churches." The allusions to Paul are very frequent and apparent, though he is not mentioned by name. Some one is spoken of who misrepresented Peter, saying

<sup>1</sup> Herzog, "Real Encyklopädie."

that Peter believed with the Gentiles, but did not dare to say so openly. This person is called an enemy, who received letters from the High Priests to persecute Christians at Damascus. Paul is evidently described as Simon Magus. It is said that this Simon (Paul) preceded Peter to the Gentiles and Peter followed him, "as light follows darkness;" Simon is called "a deceiver;" he is said to have obtained all his knowledge of Christ in a vision, which Peter argues is far inferior to his own personal intercourse with Jesus. Peter also rebukes Simon (Paul) for having opposed him, the Rock, the foundation of the church, and "withstood" him openly, and having said that Peter was "self-condemned." The same Greek words used by Paul in Galatians "withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed," (Gal. ii. 11.), are here put into the mouth of Simon Magus. That the name of Paul is omitted, while the allusions to him are so plain, shows that his hostility was veiled in order not to give too much offence to the Pauline Christians.

With the fall of Jerusalem the unity of the ancient Jewish Christian church was gradually lost. When Augustine came, his powerful influence placed Pauline Christianity in the front of Christian teaching as the type of true orthodoxy. And it so remained, undisturbed, down to the Reformation. It is true that many of the leading teachers in the Western church varied very widely from the fundamental Pauline views, but they never openly dissented from Paul himself.

At the time of the Reformation, the two chief Protestant teachers, Luther and Calvin, made Paul's doctrines the basis of their faith. They did not always understand him, they exaggerated his ideas; but the result was that the authority of this apostle stood higher than ever before.

Still, the old opposition to Paul often reappeared, in some form of Pelagianism in the Roman Catholic Church, and often as a mystical tendency elsewhere. Perhaps it never was more marked than in Swedenborg, who, repelled by the hard orthodoxy of the Lutheran churches of his time, attributed to Paul the source of the doctrines which he disliked. His followers are not fond of admitting this, and are inclined to conceal his bitter hostility to our Apostle. But there is no doubt of the fact. In his diary, Oct. 28, 1748, he makes Paul ask him if he was not speaking ill of him. July 10, 1749, he tells us that Paul wished to be the companion of a devil, so that they might go together and make themselves Gods. Swedenborg accused Paul of tempting him to sin, and said that Paul's nefarious character was thus made known to him. "Paul," he declares, "is among the worst of the apostles, as has been made known to me by a large experience. The love of self whereby he was governed before he preached the Gospel, continued to rule him afterwards; and from that love he had a passion for scenes of controversy and tumult. He did all things with the end of being the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven. That such is Paul's character is manifest from very much experience, for I have spoken with him more than with others. The rest of the apostles in the other life rejected him from their society and refused to recognize him. He associated himself with one of the worst devils. He wished to form a Heaven in which he should be the dispenser of pleasures. He wished to have hypocrites about him. There were hypocrites around me for many days, as *I knew by the aching of my teeth*. I perceived that their pressure upon me was from Paul. He hates the internal sense of the Word. . . . Spoke with Paul. He wished to be an



introducer to Heaven, and that the Lord would receive those whom he would pass. . . . He said he wished to take the office from Peter, as he had done greater service. Paul utterly dislikes Peter," &c.

Swedenborg rejected the Epistles of Paul, and declared that they made no part of Sacred Scripture. He says of them, "It is known in the other life that Paul's Epistles have no internal sense. Paul was not allowed to take a single parable or doctrine from the Lord."<sup>1</sup>

The reason why Swedenborg felt this antipathy for Paul probably was that he believed him the author of Calvinism, especially of predestination, which to Swedenborg was very odious. He makes Calvin live in a cave with those who had confirmed themselves in the execrable doctrine of Predestination, and where the delight of their lives was to do each other harm.<sup>1</sup>

The apostle Paul has also been vigorously attacked by some modern writers, often by those who have the strongest tendency to rationalism.

In his book called "The Cradle of Christ" Mr. Frothingham has made some remarks concerning the apostle Paul which deserve a brief examination. Mr. Frothingham represents a certain class of thinkers, and it is in this representative character that I propose to consider his statements.

In page 83, he says that "the Messianic impulse, outlined in the earliest literature of the New Testament would have spent itself and not founded a church, but for Paul, who brought forward a new conception of Jesus."

<sup>1</sup> These quotations from Swedenborg are from "Emanuel Swedenborg. By William White. Second Edition. London, 1868."

As Mr. Frothingham, with all other scholars, regards the writings of Paul as constituting the earliest literature of the New Testament, it must be by a slip of the pen that he uses this expression in regard to the gospels. Page 50, he speaks of "the earliest writings of the New Testament, the genuine letters of Paul." How he has discovered that the impulse given by Jesus to the world would have died out, had it not been for Paul, does not appear. We have seen that Renan takes a diametrically opposite view. Paul gave a direction to the great movement which originated in Jesus, but he himself traced back all his strength of conviction to the influence of his Master. Paul's "religious belief," says Mr. Frothingham (page 85), "remained essentially, even incidentally, unaltered. A Pharisee he was born, and a Pharisee he continued."

No one was *born* a Pharisee, for this was not an order like the priesthood, received as a birthright, but one into which men entered by a voluntary act. If his religious belief was that of the Pharisees, and continued unaltered, why was he persecuted by the Jewish zealots, who waged no such war against the Jewish apostles?

"His conception of God," says our author, "was the ordinary conception, unqualified, unmitigated, uncompromised." The reason given for this statement is that Paul continued to teach the divine sovereignty. But all theists believe in the divine sovereignty; this, therefore, was no Jewish peculiarity. He is surprised at Paul's "tremendous assertion of the absolute supremacy of God" (page 35). But surely we all believe that God is absolutely supreme!

Read 1 Cor. xv. 24-29. The old-fashioned Jewish conception is expressed in language simply revolting, from

its bold inhumanity. The views of divine Providence set forth in some of these sentences are anthropomorphic to a degree that is amazing in an intellectual man of his age and race."<sup>1</sup>

The passage referred to is that which begins "Then the end! when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father;" and ends, "that God may be all in all." I think it is evident that by this statement Paul means that Jesus is to conquer all the evils and sins of the world by the power of his truth, and that then Christianity, as a separate system, distinguished from universal religion, will cease. When all mankind are brought to the Father, his special work of bringing them to the Father will, of course, be ended.

This writer goes on to say of Paul, that his discussions of fate and freewill are dogmatic and stern; that his notion of history is narrow; and his ethics taken from the law of Moses. He asserts that "the grandest ethical chapter Paul ever wrote, the twelfth of Romans, contains no less than three instances of grave infidelity to the highest standard of morality in his own scriptures." One of the passages which he finds so objectionable is that in which Paul says, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men," "implying clearly," says Mr. Frothingham, "that it might not always be possible, and in such cases was not to be expected." But if we live peaceably as far as we are able, one would think no more would be required. If our friend, in reading the verse, had laid the emphasis on "you," I think he would hardly have found it necessary to bring this charge against Paul. "If it be possible, as much as lieth *in you*, live peaceably with all men." Men may refuse to live peace-

<sup>1</sup> The Cradle of Christ, p. 86.

ably with us ; *that* we cannot prevent. But, as far as *we* are concerned, we can live peaceably with them.

Mr. Frothingham quotes passages from the Talmud, which he conceives to teach a higher morality than that of Paul. As far as I can see, these Talmudic sentences are more vague and less noble than those of the Apostle. But however that may be, what does our writer mean by the following sentences ?

“Paul’s acquaintance with the Talmud is evidenced by his writings. The use of allegory, &c. . . . betray his familiarity with that curious literature. He found a mine of precious material in the mythical Adam Cædmon.”

The Talmud, as Mr. Frothingham must know, was certainly not committed to writing until about A. D. 200, when the Mischna was arranged by Rabbi Yehudah. It is the opinion of scholars that it was transmitted till long after that time only in the form of oral tradition. To speak of Paul’s acquaintance with “*that curious literature*” is therefore, to say the least, a singular use of language. But still more remarkable is the supposition that Paul was acquainted with “the mythical Adam Cædmon.” This personage, Adam Cædmon, is not in the Talmud, but was imagined by the later Cabbalists. Now the peculiar system of theosophy called the Cabbala (or Kabbalah), was not developed among the Jews until the tenth century of the Christian era ; and the Adam Cædmon was not known until that time. There is no evidence that the Rabbis who made the revision of the Talmud, had ever heard of him.

Again, our writer says, “Paul, a student of the Talmud,” and, “From the Talmud and other Rabbinical writings, Paul derived a complete angelology.” But, as we have said, the Talmud was not *written* till long after the days of Paul.

Once more, he says that Paul probably obtained his idea of the Messiah from the Talmud, and its Metathron, a king of the angels; and adds, "In his amplification on this theme Paul shows little originality, and adds nothing important to the material lying ready to his hand." If Paul had so little originality, how happened he to be able to convert the world with this second-hand Jewish theology?

Again, he tells us that a large part of the Epistle to the Romans "is intellectually arid, and devoid of human interest. The same may be said of the letter to the Galatians." This is hardly the way of treating two books which have probably influenced mankind more than most others, having had a large share in producing the Lutheran Reformation, and the Methodist movement in England, to say nothing of Puritanism and all that has grown out of it.

Our critic concludes that "Paul's genius was disastrously circumscribed within Hebrew limits; that he was not a philosopher, a theologian, a metaphysician, or a psychologist; that the problems he discussed were formal, not vital, and his leading thoughts borrowed, and not original." But notwithstanding these limitations, he believes that Christianity would have had no prolonged life, but would have perished as an incidental phase of Judaism, had it not been for Paul's work. According to this view, a man with no originality, and who dealt with formal statements, not vital truths, was the founder of a religion for mankind, and converted the civilized world to the Christian faith.

When we read such criticisms as these we are led to think that the "personal equation" must be very largely responsible for them. As some persons are born Platonists, and others Aristotelians, so some seem to be born to dislike Paul, and others to reverence and admire him.

## NOTE E.

## WORKS ON THE PAULINE LETTERS.

*[The following are a few of the more important works upon Paul and his writings.]*

PAUL, &c., By Ferdinand C. Baur, second edition, edited by Zeller. Translated into English by Rev. A. Menzies. Theological Translation Fund Library. London, 1875.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, THEIR CONTENTS AND ORIGIN CRITICALLY INVESTIGATED BY DR. EDWARD ZELLER. With Overbeck's Introduction to the Acts. Translated by Joseph Dare. Theological Translation' Fund, 1876.

THE TÜBINGEN SCHOOL AND ITS ANTECEDENTS. By R. W. Mackay. 1863.

JEWISH CHRISTIANS AND JUDAISM. A STUDY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. By W. R. Sorley, Cambridge, England. 1881.

L'APÔTRE PAUL. EQUISSE D'UNE HISTOIRE DE SA PENSÉE. Par A. Sabatier, Deuxième Édition, revue et augmentée. 1883.

HOLSTEN. Das Evangelium des Paulus. 1880.

SAINT PAUL. Par Ernest Renan, membre de l'Institut. Paris, 1869.

THE LIFE AND WORK OF PAUL. By F. W. Farrar, D. D., &c. London and New York.



A PARAPHRASE AND NOTES ON THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL, to which is prefixed an essay on understanding of St. Paul's Epistles by consulting St. Paul himself. By John Locke.

LIFE AND EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL. - By Conybeare and Howson.

HISTOIRE DE LA THÉOLOGIE CHRÉTIENNE AU SIÈCLE APOSTOLIQUE. Par Edward Reuss. 1874.

COMMENTARIES ON THE EPISTLES OF PAUL. By Tholuck (Romans); De Wette, Meyer, Olshausen, Jowett (Thessalonians, Romans and Galatians); Stanley (1st and 2d Corinthians); Lightfoot (Galatians); Zimmer ("Galaterbrief und Apostelgeschichte, 1882"); Hilgenfeld ("Der Galaterbrief, 1852"); ("Einleitung in das N. T., 1875"); Moses Stuart ("Commentary on the Romans"); and Commentaries on Paul's Epistles in Lange (by Lange, Kling, Braune, Lechler, Gerok, &c.); Philippi ("Commentary on the Romans"), F. Godet ("Commentary on Romans," 1882. In T. and T. Clark's Foreign Theological Library, 1881); Meyer's "Commentary on the New Testament." Ph. Schaff (Romans).

INTRODUCTIONS TO THE NEW TESTAMENT. Horne, De Wette, Reuss, Bleek (edited by Mongold, 1875).

HISTORIES. Neander ("Planting and Training of the Apostolic Church"); Pressensé ("Histoire des trois premiers Siècles de Christianisme"); Ritschl, ("Entstehung der altkatholischen Kirche, 1857,"); Ewald, ("Geschichte des Volkes Israel, vol. vi."); Keim ("Aus dem urchristenthum," 1878); Aubé ("Histoire des persécutions de l'Église jusqu' à la fin des Antonins. 1875.")

Some interesting monographs connected with the subject are :—

LOST AND HOSTILE GOSPELS. By S. Baring Gould. 1874.

SÉNÈQUE ET ST. PAUL. Par Charles Aubertin. Paris, 1869.

ENTWICKELUNG DES PAULINISCHEN LEHRBEGRIFFES. Von Leonhard Usteri. Zurich, 1834.

PAUL AND PROTESTANTISM. By Matthew Arnold.

LECTURES ON THE EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS. By Fred. W. Robertson.

Articles on Paul, in Smith's "Dictionary to the Bible," Schenkel's "Bibel-Lexicon," Encyclopædia by McClintock and Strong.

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